



LIVING THOUGHTS

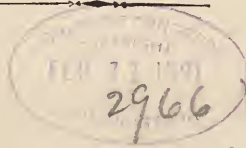
OF

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JOHN WESLEY

*A COMPREHENSIVE SELECTION OF THE LIVING THOUGHTS
OF THE FOUNDER OF METHODISM AS CONTAINED
IN HIS MISCELLANEOUS WORKS*

BY

JAMES H. POTTS

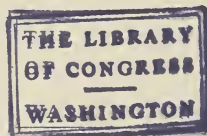


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PREFACE.

THE works of Rev. John Wesley are a gold-mine of doctrine and instruction ; but, like other gold-mines, they contain a few things which are not gold. The two volumes of his sermons are nearly all pure gold. His journals and correspondence are also rich and valuable. His miscellaneous writings, however, require some sifting before their circulation in this country can be much revived. There is so much of the controversial element in them, so much of personal or merely local reference having no present significance, and so much of general discussion and argumentation pertaining to the Old World of a century ago that Americans do not feel much interested in them. Many trivial matters are also to be found, and several of the important treatises, like the French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew grammars, have become obsolete.

But scattered along among these old documents are many literary and doctrinal gems of rarest value, needing only a new typographical background, better mechanical finish, and more modern arrangement and setting to be appreciated at their worth and eagerly sought for by all good people.

To separate these gems from their old surroundings, group them in convenient and attractive form, and to preserve them from loss in the transition has been the undertaking of the present compiler.

From the seven volumes of Mr. Wesley's works, sermons excepted, we have chosen such articles and paragraphs as seemed to us of greatest permanent value, and have formed them into this one volume, which will, we believe, be found of liveliest interest and rarest excellence.

Here Mr. Wesley as a teacher is seen at his best. Most of

these compositions were designed by him for the permanent page. They were written at different stages of his public career, and, with few exceptions, contain his most vigorous and mature thought upon the various subjects treated.

The public is invited to a careful perusal. Every thing that Mr. Wesley wrote is worth reading, and his best writings admit of long-continued and thorough study. The present and succeeding generations of his followers especially ought to be well informed in those teachings so vital to the existence and welfare of early Methodism, and never without their deep significance and forceful bearing upon the cause of righteousness while the world continues to sin, and antichrist approaches to his reign.

JAMES H. POTTS.

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LIVING THOUGHTS OF JOHN WESLEY.

A PLAIN ACCOUNT OF THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS.

(THE following letter was written by Mr. Wesley in 1748. He was then forty-five years old. It was addressed to Rev. Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham and Kent. It appears to have been published immediately, and to have produced a deep impression upon the public mind. A friend abroad, writing to Mr. Wesley in 1749, says: "Your letter to D. Perronet (A Plain Account, etc.) I have not so much read as devoured; and all things have so pleased me that I can scarcely restrain myself from flying to London, that I may *come* and *see* the order of your society. . . . So soon as possible I will translate and print that letter, together with that little tract, *The Character of a Methodist*. Perhaps it will excite some, if not many, of the clergy or laity to follow more fully the gospel way. It pleases me much that you attach yourself neither to any sect nor to the peculiar dogmas of sects, nor act as the patron of those dogmas, but leave to each one the liberty of believing what he will concerning them, provided only he have true faith in God and his beloved Son, love God with all his heart, abstain from sin, and lead a life worthy of the gospel calling.")

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR: 1. Some time since you desired an account of the whole economy of the people commonly called *Methodists*. And you received a true (as far as it went), but not a full account. To supply what I think was wanting in that I send you this account, that you may know not only their practice on every head, but likewise the reasons whereon it is grounded, the occasion of every step they have taken, and the advantages reaped thereby.

2. But I must premise that as they had not the least expectation, at first, of any thing like what has since followed, so they had no previous design or plan at all; but every thing arose just as the occasion offered. They saw or felt some impending or pressing evil, or some good end necessary to be pursued. And many times they fell unawares on the very thing which secured the good or removed the evil. At other times they consulted on the most probable means, following only common sense and Scripture; though they generally found, in looking back, something in Christian antiquity likewise very nearly parallel thereto.

I. 1. About ten years ago my brother and I were desired to preach in many parts of London. We had no view therein but, so far as we were able (and we knew God could work by whomsoever it pleased him), to convince those who would hear what true Christianity was and to persuade them to embrace it.

2. The points we chiefly insisted upon were four: First, that orthodoxy or right opinions is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all; that neither does religion consist in negatives, in bare harmlessness of any kind; nor merely in externals, in doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety (so-called) or of charity; that it is nothing short of or different from "the mind that was in Christ;" the image of God stamped upon the heart; inward righteousness, attended with the peace of God; and "joy in the Holy Ghost." Secondly, that the only way under heaven to this religion is to "repent and believe the Gospel;" or (as the apostle words it), "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Thirdly, that by this faith "he that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ." And, lastly, that "being justified by faith" we taste of the heaven to which we are going; we are holy and happy; we tread down sin and fear, and "sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus."

3. Many of those who heard this began to cry out that we brought "strange things to their ears;" that this was doctrine which they never heard before, or at least never regarded. They "searched the Scriptures whether these things were so," and acknowledged "the truth as it is in Jesus." Their hearts also were influenced as well as their understandings, and they determined to follow "Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

4. Immediately they were surrounded with difficulties; all the world rose up against them; neighbors, strangers, acquaintances,

relations, friends, began to cry out amain, "Be not righteous overmuch; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" Let not "much religion make thee mad."

5. One and another and another came to us, asking what they should do, being distressed on every side; as every one strove to weaken, and none to strengthen, their hands in God. We advised them, "Strengthen you one another. Talk together as often as you can. And pray earnestly with and for one another, that you may 'endure to the end and be saved.'" Against this advice we presumed there could be no objection; as being grounded on the plainest reason, and on so many scriptures, both of the Old Testament and New, that it would be tedious to recite them.

6. They said, "But we want you likewise to talk with us often, to direct and quicken us in our way, to give us the advices which you well know we need, and to pray with us, as well as for us." I asked, Which of you desire this? Let me know your names and places of abode. They did so. But I soon found they were too many for me to talk with severally so often as they wanted it. So I told them, "If you will all of you come together every Thursday, in the evening, I will gladly spend some time with you in prayer and give you the best advice I can."

7. Thus arose, without any previous design on either side, what was afterward called a *Society*; a very innocent name, and very common in London, for any number of people associating themselves together. The thing proposed in their associating themselves together was obvious to every one. They wanted to "flee from the wrath to come," and to assist each other in so doing. They therefore united themselves "in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they might help each other to work out their salvation."

8. There is one only condition previously required in those who desire admission into this society—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins." (See the Rules of the United Societies.) They now likewise agreed that as many of them as had an opportunity would meet together every Friday, and spend the dinner-hour in crying to God, both for each other and for all mankind.

9. It quickly appeared that their thus uniting together answered the end proposed therein. In a few months the far greater part of those who had begun to "fear God, and work righteousness," but were not united together, grew faint in their minds and fell back into what they were before. Meanwhile the

far greater part of those who were thus united together continued "striving to enter in at the strait gate," and to "lay hold on eternal life."

10. Upon reflection I could not but observe, This is the very thing which was from the beginning of Christianity. In the earliest times, those whom God had sent forth "preached the Gospel to every creature." And the *οἱ ἀκροαταί*, "the body of hearers," were mostly either Jews or heathens. But as soon as any of these were so convinced of the truth as to forsake sin and seek the gospel salvation they immediately joined them together, took an account of their names, advised them to watch over each other, and met these *κατεχουμένοι*, "catechumens" (as they were then called), apart from the great congregation, that they might instruct, rebuke, exhort, and pray with them, and for them, according to their several necessities.

11. But it was not long before an objection was made to this which had not once entered into my thought: "Is not this making a schism? Is not the joining these people together, gathering churches out of churches?"

It was easily answered, "If you mean only gathering people out of buildings called churches, it is. But if you mean dividing Christians from Christians, and so destroying Christian fellowship, it is not. For, (1) These were not Christians before they were thus joined. Most of them were barefaced heathens. (2) Neither are they Christians from whom you suppose them to be divided. You will not look me in the face and say they are. What! drunken Christians! cursing and swearing Christians! lying Christians! cheating Christians! If these are Christians at all, they are devil Christians, as the poor Malabarians term them. (3) Neither are they divided any more than they were before, even from these wretched devil Christians. They are as ready as ever to assist them, and to perform every office of real kindness toward them. (4) If it be said, "But there are some true Christians in the parish, and you destroy the Christian fellowship between these and them," I answer, That which never existed cannot be destroyed. But the fellowship you speak of never existed. Therefore it cannot be destroyed. Which of those true Christians had any such fellowship with these? Who watched over them in love? Who marked their growth in grace? Who advised and exhorted them from time to time? Who prayed with them and for them, as they had need? This, and this alone, is Christian fellowship; but, alas! where is it to be

found? Look east or west, north or south; name what parish you please; is this Christian fellowship there? Rather, are not the bulk of the parishioners a mere rope of sand? What Christian connection is there between them? What intercourse in spiritual things? What watching over each other's souls? What bearing of one another's burdens? What a mere jest is it, then, to talk so gravely of destroying what never was! The real truth is just the reverse of this: we introduce Christian fellowship where it was utterly destroyed. And the fruits of it have been peace, joy, love, and zeal for every good word and work.

II. 1. But as much as we endeavored to watch over each other, we soon found some who did not live the Gospel. I do not know that any hypocrites were crept in; for, indeed, there was no temptation; but several grew cold, and gave way to the sins which had long easily beset them. We quickly perceived there were many ill consequences of suffering these to remain among us. It was dangerous to others, inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature. It brought such a scandal on their brethren as exposed them to what was not properly the reproach of Christ. It laid a stumbling-block in the way of others, and caused the truth to be evil spoken of.

2. We groaned under these inconveniences long before a remedy could be found. The people were scattered so wide in all parts of the town, from Wapping to Westminster, that I could not easily see what the behavior of each person in his own neighborhood was, so that several disorderly walkers did much hurt before I was apprised of it.

3. At length, while we were thinking of quite another thing, we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since. I was talking with several of the society in Bristol concerning the means of paying the debts there, when one stood up and said, "Let every member of the society give a penny a week till all are paid." Another answered, "But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it." "Then," said he, "put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well: I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, I will give for them as well as for myself. And each of you call on eleven of your neighbors weekly, receive what they give, and make up what is wanting." It was done. In a while some of these informed me they found such and such an one did not live as he ought. It struck me immediately, "This is the thing, the very thing we have wanted so long." I called together all the

leaders of the classes (so we used to term them and their companies), and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behavior of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways. Some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence.

4. As soon as possible the same method was used in London and all other places. Evil men were detected and reprov'd. They were borne with for a season. If they forsook their sins, we received them gladly; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared that they were not of us. The rest mourned and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced that, as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the society.

5. It is the business of a leader :

(1) To see each person in his class, once a week at the least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor.

(2) To meet the minister and the stewards of the society, in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that are disorderly and will not be reprov'd; to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

6. At first they visited each person at his own house; but this was soon found not so expedient. And that on many accounts : (1) It took up more time than most of the leaders had to spare. (2) Many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, who would not suffer them to be thus visited. (3) At the houses of those who were not so averse they often had no opportunity of speaking to them but in company. And this did not at all answer the end proposed, of exhorting, comforting, or reprov'g. (4) It frequently happened that one affirmed what another denied. And this could not be cleared up without seeing them together. (5) Little misunderstandings and quarrels of various kinds frequently arose among relations or neighbors; effectually to remove which it was needful to see them all face to face. Upon all these considerations it was agreed that those of each class should meet all together. And by this means a more full inquiry was made into the behavior of every person. Those who could not be visited at home, or no otherwise than in company, had the same advantage with others. Advice or reproof was given as need required, quarrels made up, misunderstandings re-

moved, and after an hour or two spent in this labor of love, they concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.

7. It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experienced that Christian fellowship of which they had not so much as an idea before. They began to "bear one another's burdens," and naturally to "care for each other." As they had daily a more intimate acquaintance with, so they had a more endeared affection for, each other. And, "speaking the truth in love, they grew up into him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplied, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increased unto the edifying itself in love."

8. But, notwithstanding all these advantages, many were at first extremely averse to meeting thus. Some, viewing it in a wrong point of light, not as a privilege (indeed an invaluable one), but rather a restraint, disliked it on that account, because they did not love to be restrained in any thing. Some were ashamed to speak before company. Others honestly said, "I do not know why, but I do not like it."

9. Some objected, "There were no such meetings when I came into the society first; and why should there now? I do not understand these things, and this changing one thing after another continually." It was easily answered: It is pity but they had been at first. But we knew not then either the need or the benefit of them. Why we use them, you will readily understand, if you read over the rules of the society. That with regard to these little prudential helps we are continually changing one thing after another is not a weakness or fault, as you imagine, but a peculiar advantage which we enjoy. By this means we declare them all to be merely prudential, not essential, not of divine institution. We prevent, so far as in us lies, their growing formal or dead. We are always open to instruction; willing to be wiser every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can change for the better.

10. Another objection was, "There is no Scripture for this, for classes and I know not what." I answer: (1) There is no Scripture against it. You cannot show one text that forbids them. (2) There is much Scripture for it, even all those texts which enjoin the substance of those various duties whereof this is only an indifferent circumstance, to be determined by reason and

experience. (3) You seem not to have observed that the Scripture, in most points, gives only general rules, and leaves the particular circumstances to be adjusted by the common sense of mankind. The Scripture, for instance, gives that general rule, "Let all things be done decently and in order." But common sense is to determine, on particular occasions, what order and decency require. So, in another instance, the Scripture lays it down as a general standing direction: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." But it is common prudence which is to make the application of this, in a thousand particular cases.

11. "But these," said another, "are all man's inventions." This is but the same objection in another form. And the same answer will suffice for any reasonable person: These are man's inventions. And what then? That is, they are methods which men have found, by reason and common sense, for the more effectually applying several Scripture rules, couched in general terms, to particular occasions.

12. They spoke far more plausibly than these, who said, "The thing is well enough in itself. But the leaders are insufficient for the work; they have neither gifts nor graces for such an employment." I answer: (1) Yet, such leaders as they are, it is plain God has blessed their labor. (2) If any of these is remarkably wanting in gifts or grace, he is soon taken notice of and removed. (3) If you know any such, tell it to me, not to others, and I will endeavor to exchange him for a better. (4) It may be hoped they will all be better than they are, both by experience and observation, and by the advices given them by the minister every Tuesday night, and the prayers (then in particular) offered up for them.

III. 1. About this time I was informed that several persons in Kingswood frequently met together at the school; and, when they could spare the time, spent the greater part of the night in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. Some advised me to put an end to this, but upon weighing the thing thoroughly, and comparing it with the practice of the ancient Christians, I could see no cause to forbid it. Rather, I believed it might be made of more general use. So I sent them word, I designed to watch with them on the Friday nearest the full moon, that we might have light thither and back again. I gave public notice of this the Sunday before, and withal, that I intended to preach; desiring they, and they only, would meet me there, who could do it

without prejudice to their business or families. On Friday abundance of people came. I began preaching between eight and nine, and we continued till a little beyond the noon of night, singing, praying, and praising God.

2. This we have continued to do once a month ever since, in Bristol, London, and Newcastle, as well as Kingswood; and exceeding great are the blessings we have found therein; it has generally been an extremely solemn season; when the word of God sunk deep into the heart, even of those who till then knew him not. If it be said, "This was only owing to the novelty of the thing (the circumstance which still draws such multitudes together at those seasons), or perhaps to the awful silence of the night," I am not careful to answer in this matter. Be it so, however, the impression then made on many souls has never since been effaced. Now, allowing that God did make use either of the novelty or any other indifferent circumstance, in order to bring sinners to repentance, yet they are brought. And herein let us rejoice together.

3. Nay, may I not put the case farther yet? If I can probably conjecture that, either by the novelty of this ancient custom or by any other indifferent circumstance, it is in my power to "save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins," am I clear before God if I do it not, if I do not snatch that brand out of the burning?

IV. 1. As the society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to this I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every member myself, and to inquire at their own mouths, as well as of their leaders and neighbors, whether they grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. At these seasons I likewise particularly inquire whether there be any misunderstanding or difference among them; that every hinderance of peace and brotherly love may be taken out of the way.

2. To each of those of whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt, I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose; every ticket implying as strong a recommendation of the person to whom it was given as if I had wrote at length, "I believe the bearer hereof to be one that fears God, and works righteousness."

3. Those who bore these tickets (these *συμβολα* or *tesseræ*, as the ancients termed them, being of just the same force with the

ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαὶ, *commendatory letters*, mentioned by the apostle), wherever they came, were acknowledged by their brethren, and received with all cheerfulness. These were likewise of use in other respects. By these it was easily distinguished, when the society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member. He has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation (for so often the tickets are changed); and hereby it is immediately known that he is no longer of the community.

V. The thing which I was greatly afraid of all this time, and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing, was a narrowness of spirit, a party zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels; that miserable bigotry which makes many so unready to believe that there is any work of God but among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this frequently to read, to all who were willing to hear, the accounts I received from time to time of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own and other countries, not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations. For this I allotted one evening in every month, and I find no cause to repent my labor. It is generally a time of strong consolation to those who love God, and all mankind for his sake; as well as of breaking down the partition walls which either the craft of the devil or the folly of men has built up; and of encouraging every child of God to say (O when shall it once be!), “Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

VI. 1. By the blessing of God upon their endeavors to help one another, many found the pearl of great price. Being justified by faith, they had “peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” These felt a more tender affection than before, to those who were partakers of like precious faith; and hence arose such a confidence in each other, that they poured out their souls into each other’s bosom. Indeed, they had great need so to do; for the war was not over, as they had supposed; but they had still to wrestle both with flesh and blood, and with principalities and powers; so that temptations were on every side; and often temptations of such a kind as they knew not how to speak in a class, in which persons of every sort, young and old, men and women, met together.

2. These, therefore, wanted some means of closer union; they

wanted to pour out their hearts without reserve, particularly with regard to the sin which did still easily beset them, and the temptations which were most apt to prevail over them. And they were the more desirous of this when they observed it was the express advice of an inspired writer : "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed."

3. In compliance with their desire I divided them into smaller companies; putting the married or single men, and married or single women together. The chief rules of these bands (that is, little companies; so that old English word signifies) run thus:

"In order to 'confess our faults one to another,' and pray one for another that we may be healed, we intend, (1) To meet once a week at the least. (2) To come punctually at the hour appointed. (3) To begin with singing or prayer. (4) To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting. (5) To desire some person among us (thence called a leader) to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be concerning their state, sins, and temptations."

4. That their design in meeting might be the more effectually answered I desired all the men bands to meet me together every Wednesday evening and the women on Sunday, that they might receive such particular instructions and exhortations as from time to time might appear to be most needful for them; that such prayers might be offered up to God as their necessities should require; and praise returned to the Giver of every good gift for whatever mercies they had received.

5. In order to increase in them a grateful sense of all his mercies, I desired that one evening in a quarter all the men in band, on a second all the women would meet, and on a third both men and women together, that we might together "eat bread," as the ancient Christians did, "with gladness and singleness of heart." At these love-feasts (so we termed them, retaining the name as well as the thing which was in use from the beginning) our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with the "bread which perisheth," but with "that which endureth to everlasting life."

6. Great and many are the advantages which have ever since flowed from this closer union of the believers with each other. They prayed for one another that they might be healed of the faults

they had confessed; and it was so. The chains were broken, the bands were burst in sunder, and sin had no more dominion over them. Many were delivered from the temptations out of which till then they found no way to escape. They were built up in our most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.

7. But it was soon objected to the bands (as to the classes before), "These were not at first. There is no Scripture for them. These are man's works, man's building, man's invention." I reply, as before, these are also prudential helps, grounded on reason and experience, in order to apply the general rules given in Scripture according to particular circumstances.

8. An objection much more boldly and frequently urged is that "all these bands are mere popery." I hope I need not pass a harder censure on those (most of them at least) who affirm this than that they talk of they know not what; they betray in themselves the most gross and shameful ignorance. Do not they yet know that the only popish confession is the confession made by a single person to a priest? and this itself is in nowise condemned by our Church; nay, she recommends it in some cases. Whereas, that we practice is the confession of several persons conjointly, not to a priest, but to each other. Consequently it has no analogy at all to popish confession. But the truth is, this is a stale objection which many people make against any thing they do not like. It is all popery out of hand.

VII. 1. And yet while most of these who were thus intimately joined together went on daily from faith to faith, some fell from the faith, either all at once, by falling into known and willful sin, or gradually, and almost insensibly, by giving way in what they called little things, by sins of omission, by yielding to heart sins, or by not watching unto prayer. The exhortations and prayers used among the believers did no longer profit these. They wanted advice and instruction suited to their case, which as soon as I observed I separated them from the rest, and desired them to meet me apart on Saturday evenings.

2. At this hour all the hymns, exhortations, and prayers are adapted to their circumstances, being wholly suited to those who *did* see God, but have now lost sight of the light of his countenance, and who mourn after him and refuse to be comforted till they know he has healed their backsliding.

3. By applying both the threats and promises of God to these

real, not nominal, penitents, and by crying to God in their behalf, we endeavored to bring them back to the great "Shepherd and Bishop of their souls," not by any of the fopperies of the Roman Church, although in some measure countenanced by antiquity. In prescribing hair shirts and bodily austerities we durst not follow even the ancient Church, although we had unawares, both in dividing *οι πιστοι*, the believers, from the rest of the society, and in separating the penitents from them and appointing a peculiar service for them.

VIII. 1. Many of these soon recovered the ground they had lost. Yea, they rose higher than before, being more watchful than ever, and more meek and lowly, as well as stronger in the faith that worketh by love. They now outran the greater part of their brethren, continually walking in the light of God, and having fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

2. I saw it might be useful to give some advices to all those who continued in the light of God's countenance, which the rest of their brethren did not want, and probably could not receive. So I desired a small number of such as appeared to be in this state to spend an hour with me every Monday morning. My design was not only to direct them how to press after perfection, to exercise every grace, and improve every talent they had received, and to incite them to love one another more, and to watch more carefully over each other; but also to have a select company to whom I might unbosom myself on all occasions without reserve, and whom I could propose to all their brethren as a pattern of love, of holiness, and of good works.

3. They had no need of being incumbered with many rules, having the best rule of all in their hearts. No peculiar directions were therefore given to them, excepting only these three:

First. Let nothing spoken in this society be spoken again. (Hereby we had the more full confidence in each other.)

Secondly. Every member agrees to submit to his minister in all indifferent things.

Thirdly. Every member will bring once a week all he can spare toward a common stock.

4. Every one here has an equal liberty of speaking, there being none greater or less than another. I could say freely to these when they were met together, "Ye may all prophesy one by one" (taking that word in its lowest sense) "that all may learn and all may be comforted." And I often found the advantage of such a free conversation, and that "in the multitude of coun-

selors there is safety." Any who is inclined so to do is likewise encouraged to pour out his soul to God. And here especially we have found that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

IX. 1. This is the plainest and clearest account I can give of the people commonly called *Methodists*. It remains only to give you a short account of those who serve their brethren in love. These are leaders of classes and bands (spoken of before), assistants, stewards, visitors of the sick, and school-masters.

2. In the third part of the "Appeal" I have mentioned how we were led to accept of lay assistants. Their office is, in the absence of the minister:

(1) To expound every morning and evening. (2) To meet the united society, the bands, the select society, and the penitents once a week. (3) To visit the classes once a quarter. (4) To hear and decide all differences. (5) To put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the bands or society. (6) To see that the stewards, the leaders, and the school-masters faithfully discharge their several offices. (7) To meet the leaders of the bands and classes weekly, and the stewards, and to overlook their accounts.

X. 1. But long before this I felt the weight of a far different care, namely, care of temporal things. The quarterly subscriptions amounted, at a mean computation, to above three hundred pounds a year. This was to be laid out, partly in repairs, partly in other necessary expenses, and partly in paying debts. The weekly contributions fell little short of eight pounds a week, which was to be distributed as every one had need. And I was expected to take thought for all these things; but it was a burden I was not able to bear, so I chose out first one, then four, and after a time seven, as prudent men as I knew, and desired them to take charge of these things upon themselves, that I might have no incumbrance of this kind.

2. The business of these stewards is:

To manage the temporal things of the society. To receive the subscriptions and contributions. To spend what is needful from time to time. To send relief to the poor. To keep an exact account of all receipts and expenses. To inform the minister if any of the rules of the society are not punctually observed. To tell the preachers, in love, if they think any thing amiss either in their doctrine or life.

3. The rules of the stewards are:

(1) Be frugal. Save every thing that can be saved honestly. (2) Spend no more than you receive. Contract no debts. (3) Have no long accounts. Pay every thing within the week. (4) Give none that asks relief either an ill word or an ill look. Do not hurt them if you cannot help. (5) Expect no thanks from man.

4. They met together at six every Thursday morning, consulted on the business which came before them, sent relief to the sick, as every one had need, and gave the remainder of what had been contributed each week to those who appeared to be in the most pressing want. So that all was concluded within the week; what was brought on Tuesday being constantly expended on Thursday. I soon had the pleasure to find that all these temporal things were done with the utmost faithfulness and exactness, so that my cares of this kind were at an end. I had only to revise the accounts, to tell them if I thought any thing might be amended, and to consult how deficiencies might be supplied from time to time, for these were frequent and large (so far were we from abundance), the income by no means answering the expenses. But that we might not faint, sometimes we had unforeseen helps in times of the greatest perplexity. At other times we borrowed larger or smaller sums, of which the greatest part has since been repaid. But I owe some hundred pounds to this day. So much have I gained by preaching the Gospel!

XI. 1. But it was not long before the stewards found a great difficulty with regard to the sick. Some were ready to perish before they knew of their illness, and when they did know it was not in their power (being persons generally employed in trade) to visit them so often as they desired.

2. When I was apprised of this I laid the case at large before the whole society; showed how impossible it was for the stewards to attend all that were sick in all parts of the town, desired the leaders of classes would more carefully inquire, and more constantly inform them who were sick, and asked, "Who among you is willing, as well as able, to supply this lack of service?"

3. The next morning many willingly offered themselves. I chose six-and-forty of them, whom I judged to be of the most tender, loving spirit, divided the town into twenty-three parts, and desired two of them to visit the sick in each division.

4. It is the business of a visitor of the sick:

To see every sick person within his district thrice a week. To inquire into the state of their souls, and to advise them as occasion may require. To inquire into their disorders and procure

advice for them. To relieve them if they are in want. To do any thing for them which he (or she) can do. To bring in his accounts weekly to the stewards. (The leaders now do this.) Upon reflection, I saw how exactly, in this also, we had copied after the primitive Church. What were the ancient deacons? What was Phebe the deaconess, but such a visitor of the sick?

5. I did not think it needful to give them any particular rules beside these that follow :

(1) Be plain and open in dealing with souls. (2) Be mild, tender, patient. (3) Be cleanly in all you do for the sick. (4) Be not nice.

6. We have ever since had great reason to praise God for his continued blessing on this undertaking. Many lives have been saved, many sicknesses healed, much pain and want prevented or removed. Many heavy hearts have been made glad, many mourners comforted; and the visitors have found, from Him whom they serve, a present reward for all their labor.

XII. 1. But I was still in pain for many of the poor that were sick; there was so great expense and so little profit. And first I resolved to try whether they might not receive more benefit in the hospitals. Upon the trial we found there was indeed less expense, but no more good done than before. I then asked the advice of several physicians for them; but still it profited not. I saw the poor people pining away, and several families ruined, and that without remedy.

2. At length I thought of a kind of desperate expedient. "I will prepare and give them physic myself." For six or seven and twenty years I had made anatomy and physic the diversion of my leisure hours; though I never properly studied them, unless for a few months when I was going to America, where I imagined I might be of some service to those who had no regular physician among them. I applied to it again. I took into my assistance an apothecary and an experienced surgeon; resolving at the same time not to go out of my depth, but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose.

3. I gave notice of this to the society, telling them that all who were ill of chronical distempers (for I did not care to venture upon acute) might, if they pleased, come to me at such a time, and I would give them the best advice I could, and the best medicines I had.

4. Many came (and so every Friday since); among the rest

was one William Kirkman, a weaver, near Old Nichol Street. I asked him, "What complaint have you?" "O, sir," said he, "a cough, a very sore cough. I can get no rest day nor night."

I asked, "How long have you had it?" He replied, "About three score years, it began when I was eleven years old." I was nothing glad that this man should come first, fearing our not curing him might discourage others. However, I looked up to God, and said, "Take this three or four times a day. If it does you no good, it will do you no harm." He took it two or three days. His cough was cured, and has not returned to this day.

5. Now, let candid men judge, does humility require me to deny a notorious fact? If not, which is vanity: to say I by my own skill restored this man to health; or to say God did it by his own almighty power? By what figure of speech this is called boasting I know not. But I will put no name to such a fact as this. I leave that to the Rev. Dr. Middleton.

6. In five months medicines were occasionally given to above five hundred persons. Several of these I never saw before, for I did not regard whether they were of the society or not. In that time seventy-one of these regularly taking their medicines, and following the regimen prescribed (which three in four would not do), were entirely cured of distempers long thought to be incurable. The whole expense of medicines during this time was nearly forty pounds. We continued this ever since, and, by the blessing of God, with more and more success.

XIII. 1. But I had for some years observed many who, although not sick, were not able to provide for themselves, and had none who took care to provide for them; these were chiefly feeble, aged widows. I consulted with the stewards how they might be relieved. They all agreed if we could keep them in one house it would not only be far less expensive to us, but also far more comfortable for them. Indeed, we had no money to begin; but we believed He would provide "who defendeth the cause of the widow," so we took a lease of two little houses near; we fitted them up so as to be warm and clean. We took in as many widows as we had room for, and provided them with things needful for the body; toward the expense of which I set aside, first, the weekly contributions of the bands, and then all that was collected at the Lord's Supper. It is true this does not suffice, so that we are considerably in debt on this account also. But we are persuaded it will not always be so; seeing "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."

2. In this (commonly called the Poor House) we have now nine widows, one blind woman, two poor children, two upper servants, a maid, and a man. I might add four or five preachers ; for I myself, as well as the other preachers who are in town, diet with the poor, on the same food, and at the same table ; and we rejoice herein, as a comfortable earnest of our eating bread together in our Father's kingdom.

3. I have blessed God for this house ever since it began, but lately much more than ever. I honor these widows, for they "are widows indeed." So that it is not in vain that, without any design of so doing, we have copied after another of the institutions of the apostolic age. I can now say to all the world, "Come and see how these Christians love one another !" (This has been since dropped for want of support.)

XIV. 1. Another thing which had given me frequent concern was the case of abundance of children. Some their parents could not afford to put to school ; so they remained like "a wild ass's colt." Others were sent to school, and learned, at least, to read and write ; but they learned all kinds of vice at the same time, so that it had been better for them to have been without their knowledge than to have bought it at so dear a price.

2. At length I determined to have them taught in my own house, that they might have an opportunity of learning to read, write, and cast accounts (if no more), without being under almost a necessity of learning heathenism at the same time ; and after several unsuccessful trials I found two such school-masters as I wanted ; men of honesty and of sufficient knowledge, who had talents for, and their hearts in the work.

3. They have now under their care nearly sixty children ; the parents of some pay for their schooling, but the greater part, being very poor, do not, so that the expense is chiefly defrayed by voluntary contributions. We have of late clothed them, too, as many as wanted. The rules of the school are these that follow : (This also has been dropped for some time, 1772.)

First. No child is admitted under six years of age. Secondly. All the children are to be present at the morning sermon. Thirdly. They are at school from six to twelve, and from one to five. Fourthly. They have no play days. Fifthly. No child is to speak in school, but to the masters. Sixthly. The child who misses two days in one week, without leave, is excluded the school.

4. We appointed two stewards for the school also. The busi-

ness of these is: to receive the school subscriptions, and expend what is needful; to talk with each of the masters weekly; to pray with and exhort the children twice a week; to inquire diligently whether they grow in grace and in learning, and whether the rules are punctually observed; every Tuesday morning, in conjunction with the masters, to exclude those children that do not observe the rules; every Wednesday morning to meet with and exhort their parents to train them up at home in the ways of God.

5. A happy change was soon observed in the children, both with regard to their tempers and behavior. They learned reading, writing, and arithmetic swiftly, and at the same time they were diligently instructed in the sound principles of religion, and earnestly exhorted to fear God and work out their own salvation.

XV. 1. A year or two ago I observed among many a distress of another kind. They frequently wanted, perhaps in order to carry on their business, a present supply of money. They scrupled to make use of a pawnbroker; but where to borrow it they knew not. I resolved to try if we could not find a remedy for this also. I went, in a few days, from one end of the town to the other, and exhorted those who had this world's goods to assist their needy brethren. Fifty pounds were contributed. This was immediately lodged in the hands of two stewards, who attended every Tuesday morning in order to lend to those who wanted any small sum, not exceeding twenty shillings, to be repaid within three months. (We now, 1772, lend any sum not exceeding five pounds.)

2. It is almost incredible, but it manifestly appears from their accounts that with this inconsiderable sum two hundred and fifty have been assisted within the space of one year. Will not God put it into the heart of some lover of mankind to increase this little stock? If this is not "lending unto the Lord," what is? O, confer not with flesh and blood, but immediately

Join hands with God, to make a poor man live!

3. I think, sir, now you know all that I know of this people. You see the nature, occasion, and design of whatever is practiced among them. And I trust you may be pretty well able to answer any questions which may be asked concerning them; particularly by those who inquire concerning my revenue, and what I do with it all.

4. Some have supposed this was no greater than that of the Bishop of London, but others computed that I received eight hundred a year from Yorkshire only. Now, if so, it cannot be so little as ten thousand pounds a year which I receive out of all England!

5. Accordingly, a gentleman in Cornwall (the rector of Redruth) extends the calculation pretty considerably. "Let me see," said he, "two millions of Methodists, and each of these paying two pence a week;" if so, I must have eight hundred and sixty thousand pounds, with some odd shillings and pence, a year.

6. A tolerable competence! But be it more or less, it is nothing at all to me. All that is contributed or collected in every place is both received and expended by others; nor have I so much as the "beholding thereof with my eyes." And so it will be, till I turn Turk or pagan. For I look upon all this revenue, be it what it may, as sacred to God and the poor; out of which, if I want any thing, I am relieved, even as another poor man. So were originally all ecclesiastical revenues, as every man of learning knows, and the bishops and priests used them only as such. If any use them otherwise now, God help them!

7. I doubt not but if I err in this, or any other point, you will pray God to show me his truth. To have "a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man" is the desire of,

Reverend and dear sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

THE NATURE, DESIGN, AND GENERAL RULES OF THE UNITED SOCIETIES

IN LONDON, BRISTOL, KINGSWOOD, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, ETC.

1. In the latter end of the year 1739 eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I

appointed a day when they might all come together, which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on Thursdays, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their number increased daily), I gave those advices, from time to time, which I judged most needful for them, and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

2. This was the rise of the United Society, first in London and then in other places. Such a society is no other than “a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.”

3. That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called *classes*, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in every class, one of whom is styled *the leader*. It is his business, (1) To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require; to receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the poor. (2) To meet the minister and the stewards of the society once a week in order to inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved; to pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding, and to show their account of what each person has contributed.

4. There is one only condition previously required in those who desire admission into these societies, a desire “to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins;” but, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind; especially that which is most generally practiced: such as the taking the name of God in vain; the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling; drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity; fighting, quarreling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling; the buying or selling uncustomed goods; the giving or

taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest; uncharitable or unprofitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers; doing to others as we would not they should do unto us; doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as the "putting on of gold or costly apparel;" the taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus; the singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God; softness, and needless self-indulgence; laying up treasures upon earth; borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, by doing good, by being, in every kind, merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible, to all men; to their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison; to their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all they have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "we are not to do good unless our heart be free to it:" by doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only: by all possible diligence and frugality, that the Gospel be not blamed: by running with patience the race that is set before them, "denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should "say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake."

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, by attending upon all the ordinances of God. Such are the public worship of God; the ministry of the word, either read or expounded; the supper of the Lord; family and private prayer; searching the Scriptures; and fasting or abstinence.

7. These are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these, we know, his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart.

If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season; but then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

JOHN WESLEY,
CHARLES WESLEY.

MAY 1, 1743.

RULES OF THE BAND SOCIETIES.

DRAWN UP DECEMBER 25, 1738.

THE design of our meeting is to obey that command of God, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."

To this end we intend:

1. To meet once a week, at the least.
2. To come punctually at the hour appointed, without some extraordinary reason.
3. To begin (those of us who are present) exactly at the hour, with singing or prayer.
4. To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt since our last meeting.
5. To end every meeting with prayer suited to the state of each person present.
6. To desire some person among us to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

Some of the questions proposed to every one before he is admitted among us may be to this effect:

1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins?
2. Have you peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ?
3. Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your spirit that you are a child of God?
4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart?
5. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you?
6. Do you desire to be told of your faults?
7. Do you desire to be told of all your faults, and that plain and home?
8. Do you desire that every one of us should tell you, from time to time, whatsoever is in his heart concerning you?
9. Consider! Do you desire we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear, concerning you?
10. Do you desire that, in doing this, we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom?
11. Is it your desire and design to be on this, and all other occasions, entirely open, so as to speak every thing that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?

Any of the preceding questions may be asked as often as occasion offers; the four following at every meeting:

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
 2. What temptations have you met with?
 3. How were you delivered?
 4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?
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DIRECTIONS GIVEN TO THE BAND SOCIETIES.

DECEMBER 25, 1744.

You are supposed to have the faith that "overcometh the world." To you, therefore, it is not grievous:

I. Carefully to abstain from doing evil; in particular,

1. Neither to buy nor sell any thing at all on the Lord's day.
2. To taste no spirituous liquor, no dram of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician.
3. To be at a word both in buying and selling.
4. To pawn nothing, no, not to save life.
5. Not to mention the fault of any behind his back, and to stop those short that do.
6. To wear no needless ornaments, such as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, laces, ruffles.
7. To use no needless self-indulgence, such as taking snuff or tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician.

II. Zealously to maintain good works; in particular,

1. To give alms of such things as you possess, and that to the uttermost of your power.
2. To reprove all that sin in your sight, and that in love and meekness of wisdom.
3. To be patterns of diligence and frugality, of self-denial, and taking up the cross daily.

III. Constantly to attend on all the ordinances of God; in particular,

1. To be at church and at the Lord's table every week, and at every public meeting of the bands.
2. To attend the ministry of the word every morning, unless distance, business, or sickness prevent.
3. To use private prayer every day; and family prayer, if you are at the head of a family.
4. To read the Scriptures, and meditate therein, at every vacant hour. And,
5. To observe, as days of fasting or abstinence, all Fridays in the year.

THE CHARACTER OF A METHODIST.

(Written in 1739.)

Not as though I had already attained.

TO THE READER.

1. SINCE the name first came abroad into the world, many have been at a loss to know what a Methodist is; what are the principles and the practice of those who are commonly called by that name; and what the distinguishing marks of this sect, "which is every-where spoken against."

2. And it being generally believed that I was able to give the clearest account of these things (as having been one of the first to whom that name was given, and the person by whom the rest were supposed to be directed), I have been called upon, in all manner of ways, and with the utmost earnestness, so to do. I yield at last to the continued importunity both of friends and enemies, and do now give the clearest account I can, in the presence of the Lord and Judge of heaven and earth, of the principles and practice whereby those who are called Methodists are distinguished from other men.

3. I say those who are called Methodists; for, let it be well observed, that this is not a name which they take to themselves, but one fixed upon them by way of reproach, without their approbation or consent. It was first given to three or four young men at Oxford, by a student of Christ Church, either in allusion to the ancient sect of physicians so called, from their teaching, that almost all diseases might be cured by a specific *method* of diet and exercise, or from their observing a more regular *method* of study and behavior than was usual with those of their age and station.

4. I should rejoice (so little ambitious am I to be at the head of any sect or party) if the very name might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion. But if that cannot be, at least let those who will use it know the meaning of the word they use. Let us not always be fighting in the dark. Come, and let us look one another in the face. And perhaps some of you who hate what I am *called* may love what I *am* by the grace of God; or rather, what "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

THE CHARACTER OF A METHODIST.

1. THE distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. His assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of notions, his espousing the judgment of one man or of another are all quite wide of the point. Whosoever, therefore, imagines that a Methodist is a man of such or such an opinion is grossly ignorant of the whole affair; he mistakes the truth totally. We believe, indeed, that "all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God;" and herein we are distinguished from Jews, Turks, and infidels. We believe the written word of God to be the only and sufficient rule both of Christian faith and practice; and herein we are fundamentally distinguished from those of the Romish Church. We believe Christ to be the eternal supreme God; and herein we are distinguished from the Socinians and Arians. But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think. So that, whatsoever they are, whether right or wrong, they are no distinguishing marks of a Methodist.

2. Neither are words or phrases of any sort. We do not place our religion, or any part of it, in being attached to any peculiar mode of speaking, any quaint or uncommon set of expressions. The most obvious, easy, common words wherein our meaning can be conveyed we prefer before others, both on ordinary occasions and when we speak of the things of God. We never, therefore, willingly or designedly, deviate from the most usual way of speaking; unless when we express Scripture truths in Scripture words, which, we presume, no Christian will condemn. Neither do we affect to use any particular expressions of Scripture more frequently than others, unless they are such as are more frequently used by the inspired writers themselves. So that it is as gross an error to place the marks of a Methodist in his words as in opinions of any sort.

3. Nor do we desire to be distinguished by actions, customs, or usages of an indifferent nature. Our religion does not lie in doing what God has not enjoined, or abstaining from what he hath not forbidden. It does not lie in the form of our apparel, in the posture of our body, or the covering of our heads, nor yet in abstaining from marriage, or from meats and drinks, which are all good if received with thanksgiving. Therefore, neither will any man who knows whereof he affirms fix the mark of a Methodist here, in any actions or customs purely indifferent, undetermined by the word of God.

4. Nor, lastly, is he distinguished by laying the whole stress of religion on any single part of it. If you say, "Yes, he is ; for he thinks 'we are saved by faith alone,'" I answer, You do not understand the terms. By salvation he means holiness of heart and life. And this he affirms to spring from true faith alone. Can even a nominal Christian deny it? Is this placing a part of religion for the whole? "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law." We do not place the whole of religion (as too many do, God knoweth) either in doing no harm or in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. No, not in all of them together; wherein we know by experience a man may labor many years and at the end have no religion at all, no more than he had at the beginning. Much less in any one of these; or, it may be, in a scrap of one of them; like her who fancies herself a virtuous woman only because she is not a prostitute, or him who dreams he is an honest man merely because he does not rob or steal. May the Lord God of my fathers preserve me from such a poor, starved religion as this! Were this the mark of a Methodist, I would sooner choose to be a sincere Jew, Turk, or Pagan.

5. "What, then, is the mark? Who is a Methodist according to your own account?" I answer, A Methodist is one who has "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him;" one who "loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength." God is the joy of his heart and the desire of his soul, which is constantly crying out, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee! My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever!"

6. He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, as having in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. "Perfect love" having now "cast out fear," he "rejoices evermore." He "rejoices in the Lord always," even "in God his Saviour," and in the Father, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he hath now received the atonement." "Having" found "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of his sins," he cannot but rejoice whenever he looks back on the horrible pit out of which he is delivered, when he sees "all his transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and his iniquities as a thick cloud." He cannot but rejoice whenever he looks on the state wherein he now is, "being justified freely, and having peace

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." For "he that believeth hath the witness" of this "in himself," being now the son of God by faith. "Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father!" And "the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God." He rejoiceth, also, whenever he looks forward, "in hope of the glory that shall be revealed;" yea, this his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again to a living hope—of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me!"

7. And he who hath this hope, thus "full of immortality, in every thing giveth thanks;" as knowing that this (whatsoever it is) "is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him." From him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying, "Good is the will of the Lord;" and whether the Lord giveth or taketh away, equally "blessing the name of the Lord." For he hath "learned, in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content." He knoweth "both how to be abased and how to abound. Every-where and in all things he is instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need." Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of his heart to Him who orders it for good; knowing that as "every good gift cometh from above," so none but good can come from the Father of lights, into whose hand he has wholly committed his body and soul, as into the hands of a faithful Creator. He is therefore "careful" (anxiously or uneasily) "for nothing;" as having "cast all his care on Him that careth for him," and "in all things" resting on him, after "making his request known to him with thanksgiving."

8. For indeed he "prays without ceasing." It is given him "always to pray, and not to faint." Not that he is always in the house of prayer, though he neglects no opportunity of being there. Neither is he always on his knees, although he often is, or on his face before the Lord his God. Nor yet is he always crying aloud to God or calling upon him in words; for many times "the Spirit maketh intercession for him with groans that cannot be uttered." But at all times the language of his heart is this: "Thou brightness of the eternal glory, unto thee is my heart, though without a voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee." And this is true prayer, and this alone. But his heart is ever lifted up to God at all times and in all places. In this he is never hindered,

much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, God is in all his thoughts; he walks with God continually, having the loving eye of his mind still fixed upon him, and every-where "seeing him that is invisible."

9. And while he thus always exercises his love to God by praying without ceasing, rejoicing evermore and in every thing giving thanks, this commandment is written in his heart, "That he who loveth God, love his brother also." And he accordingly loves his neighbor as himself; he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of "the Father of the spirits of all flesh." That a man is not personally known to him is no bar to his love; no, nor that he is known to be such as he approves not, that he repays hatred for his good-will. For he "loves his enemies;" yea, and the enemies of God, "the evil and the unthankful." And if it be not in his power to "do good to them that hate him," yet he ceases not to pray for them, though they continue to spurn his love, and still "despitefully use him and persecute him."

10. For he is "pure in heart." The love of God has purified his heart from all revengeful passions, from envy, malice, and wrath, from every unkind temper or malign affection. It hath cleansed him from pride and haughtiness of spirit, whereof alone cometh contention. And he hath now "put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering;" so that he "forbears and forgives if he had a quarrel against any, even as God in Christ hath forgiven him." And, indeed, all possible ground for contention on his part is utterly cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he "loves not the world, nor" any of "the things of the world;" being now "crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him;" being dead to all that is in the world, both to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." For "all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of his name."

11. Agreeable to this his one desire is the one design of his life, namely, "not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him." His one intention at all times and in all things is, not to please himself, but him whom his soul loveth. He has a single eye. And because "his eye is single his whole body is full of light." Indeed, where the loving eye of the soul is continually fixed upon God there can be no darkness at all, "but the whole is

light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house." God then reigns alone. All that is in the soul is holiness to the Lord. There is not a motion in his heart but is according to his will. Every thought that arises points to him and is in obedience to the law of Christ.

12. And the tree is known by its fruits. For as he loves God so he keeps his commandments, not only some or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to "keep the whole law and offend in one point," but has in all points "a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man. "Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God hath enjoined, he doeth; and that whether it be little or great, hard or easy, joyous or grievous to the flesh. He "runs the way of God's commandments," now he hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory so to do, it is his daily crown of rejoicing, "to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven;" knowing it is the highest privilege of "the angels of God, of those that excel in strength, to fulfill his commandments and harken to the voice of his word."

13. All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might. For his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength. He continually presents his soul and body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, and all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has received he constantly employs according to his Master's will, every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body. Once he "yielded" them "unto sin" and the devil, "as instruments of unrighteousness," but now, "being alive from the dead, he yields" them all "as instruments of righteousness unto God."

14. By consequence, whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God. In all his employments of every kind he not only aims at this (which is implied in having a single eye), but actually attains it. His business and refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve this great end. Whether he sit in his house or walk by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting in all he speaks or does the one business of his life; whether he put on his apparel, or labor, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God by peace and good-will among men. His one invariable rule is this: "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

15. Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his "running the race that is set before him." He knows that vice does not lose its nature though it becomes ever so fashionable, and remembers that "every man is to give an account of himself to God." He cannot, therefore, "follow" even "a multitude to do evil." He cannot "fare sumptuously every day," or "make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." He cannot "lay up treasures upon earth," any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot "adorn himself," on any pretense, "with gold or costly apparel." He cannot join in or countenance any diversion which has the least tendency to vice of any kind. He cannot "speak evil" of his neighbor any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one, for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak "idle words," "no corrupt communication" ever "comes out of his mouth," as is all that "which is" not "good to the use of edifying," not "fit to minister grace to the hearers." But "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things" are justly "of good report," he thinks and speaks and acts, "adorning the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things."

16. Lastly. As he has time he "does good unto all men," unto neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies; and that in every possible kind, not only to their bodies by "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting those that are sick or in prison;" but much more does he labor to do good to their souls, as of the ability which God giveth, to awaken those that sleep in death; to bring those who are awakened to the atoning blood that, "being justified by faith, they may have peace with God," and to provoke those who have peace with God to abound more in love and in good works. And he is willing to "spend and be spent herein," even "to be offered up on the sacrifice and service of their faith," so they may "all come unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

17. These are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do those who are in derision so called desire to be distinguished from other men. If any man say, "Why, these are only the common, fundamental principles of Christianity!" Thou hast said; so I mean; this is the very truth. I know they are no other, and I would to God both thou and all men knew that I and all who follow my judgment do vehemently refuse to be distinguished from other men by any but the common principles of Christianity—the

plain old Christianity that I teach, renouncing and detesting all other marks of distinction. And whosoever is what I preach (let him be called what he will, for names change not the nature of things), he is a Christian, not in name only, but in heart and in life. He is inwardly and outwardly conformed to the will of God, as revealed in the written word. He thinks, speaks, and lives according to the method laid down in the revelation of Jesus Christ. His soul is renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and in all true holiness. And having the mind that was in Christ, he so walks as Christ also walked.

18. By these marks, by these fruits of a living faith, do we labor to distinguish ourselves from the unbelieving world, from all those whose minds or lives are not according to the Gospel of Christ. But from real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all; not from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained. No. "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." And I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that we be in no wise divided among ourselves. Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thine? I ask no further question. If it be, give me thy hand. For opinions or terms let us not destroy the work of God. Dost thou love and serve God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, let us strive together for the faith of the Gospel, walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, remembering there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are called with one hope of our calling, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

THE PRINCIPLES OF A METHODIST.

(Written about 1743.)

1. THERE has lately appeared in the world a tract entitled, *A Brief History of the Principles of Methodism*. I doubt not but the writer's design was good, and believe he has a real desire to know the truth. And the manner wherein he pursues that design

is generally calm and dispassionate. He is, indeed, in several mistakes; but as many of these are either of small consequence in themselves, or do not immediately relate to me, it is not my concern to mention them. All of any consequence which relates to me, I think, falls under three heads :

First. That I believe justification by faith alone.

Secondly. That I believe sinless perfection. And,

Thirdly. That I believe inconsistencies.

Of each of these I will speak as plainly as I can.

2. First. That I believe justification by faith alone. This I allow. For I am firmly persuaded that every man of the offspring of Adam is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; that this corruption of our nature in every person born in the world deserves God's wrath and damnation; that therefore, if ever we receive the remission of our sins, and are accounted righteous before God, it must be only for the merit of Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings of any kind. Nay, I am persuaded that all works done before justification have in them the nature of sin, and that, consequently, till he is justified a man has no power to do any work which is pleasing and acceptable to God.

3. To express my meaning a little more at large: I believe three things must go together in our justification—upon God's part his great mercy and grace, upon Christ's part the satisfaction of God's justice by the offering of his body and shedding his blood, and upon our part true and living faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. So that in our justification there is not only God's mercy and grace, but his justice also. And so the grace of God does not shut out the righteousness of God in our justification, but only shuts out the righteousness of man—that is, the righteousness of our works.

4. And therefore St. Paul requires nothing on the part of man, but only a true and living faith. Yet this faith does not shut out repentance, hope, and love, which are joined with faith in every man that is justified. But it shuts them out from the office of justifying. So that although they are all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not all together.

5. Neither does faith shut out good works necessarily to be done afterward. But we may not do them to this intent—to be justified by doing them. Our justification comes freely of the mere mercy of God; for whereas all the world was not able to pay any part toward their ransom, it pleased him, without any of

our deserving, to prepare for us Christ's body and blood, whereby our ransom might be paid and his justice satisfied. Christ, therefore, is now the righteousness of all them that truly believe in him.

6. But, let it be observed, the true sense of those words, "We are justified by faith in Christ only," is not that this our own act, "to believe in Christ," or this our faith which is within us, justifies us, for that were to account ourselves to be justified by some act or virtue that is within us; but that although we have faith, hope, and love within us, and do never so many good works, yet we must renounce the merit of all, of faith, hope, love, and all other virtues and good works which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as far too weak to deserve our justification; for which, therefore, we must trust only in God's mercy and the merits of Christ. For it is he alone that taketh away our sins. To him alone are we to go for this; forsaking all our virtues, good words, thoughts, and works, and putting our trust in Christ only.

7. In strictness, therefore, neither our faith nor our works justify us—that is, deserve the remission of our sins. But God himself justifies us, of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only. Nevertheless, because by faith we embrace the promise of God's mercy and of the remission of our sins, therefore the Scripture says that faith does justify, yea, faith without works. And it is all one to say, "Faith without works," and "Faith alone justifies us." Therefore the ancient fathers from time to time speak thus, "Faith alone justifies us." And because we receive faith, through the only merits of Christ, and not through the merit and virtue we have or works we do, therefore in that respect we renounce, as it were, again, faith, works, and all other virtues. For our corruption through original sin is so great that all our faith, charity, words, and works cannot merit or deserve any part of our justification for us. And therefore we thus speak, humbling ourselves before God and giving Christ all the glory of our justification.

8. But it should also be observed what that faith is whereby we are justified. Now that faith which brings forth not good works is not a living faith, but a dead and devilish one. For even the devils believe that Christ was born of a virgin, that he wrought all kinds of miracles, declaring himself to be the very God; that for our sakes he died and rose again and ascended into heaven, and at the end of the world shall come again to judge

the quick and the dead. This the devils believe; and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testaments. And yet still, for all this faith, they are but devils; they remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the true Christian faith.

9. The true Christian faith is not only to believe the Holy Scriptures and the articles of our faith are true; but also to have "a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ," whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments. And this faith neither any devil hath, nor any wicked man. No ungodly man hath or can have this "sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven and he reconciled to the favor of God."

10. This is what I believe (and have believed for some years) concerning justification by faith alone. I have chose to express it in the words of a little treatise published several years ago, as being the most authentic proof, both of my past and present sentiments. If I err herein, let those who are better informed calmly point out my error to me, and I trust I shall not shut my eyes against the light, from whatsoever side it comes.

11. The second thing laid to my charge is that I believe sinless perfection. I will simply declare what I do believe concerning this also, and leave unprejudiced men to judge.

12. My last and most deliberate thoughts on this head were published but a few months since, in these words :

(1) "Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian perfection may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the nature of it. We willingly allow, and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life as implies either a dispensation from doing good and attending all the ordinances of God, or a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.

(2) "First. We not only allow, but earnestly contend, that there is no perfection in this life which implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from 'doing good unto all men, while we have time,' though 'specially unto the household of faith.' We believe that not only the babes in Christ who have newly found redemption in his blood, but those also who are 'grown up into perfect men,' are indispensably obliged, as often as they have opportunity, 'to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him,' and to 'search the Scriptures;' by fasting, as well as temperance, to 'keep their bodies under, and bring them into subjection;' and, above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly and in the great congregation.

(3) "We, secondly, believe, that there is no such perfection in this life as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance or mistake, in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities where-with the corruptible body more or less presses down the soul. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose that any inhabitant of a house of clay is wholly

exempt, either from bodily infirmities or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any is incapable of mistake, or falling into divers temptations.

(4) “‘But whom then do you mean by *one that is perfect?*’ We mean one in whom ‘is the mind which was in Christ,’ and who so ‘walketh as Christ walked;’ a ‘man that hath clean hands and a pure heart,’ or that is ‘cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;’ one in whom ‘is no occasion of stumbling,’ and who accordingly ‘doth not commit sin.’ To declare this a little more particularly: We understand by that scriptural expression, ‘a perfect man,’ one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, ‘From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.’ We understand hereby one whom God hath ‘sanctified throughout, in body, soul, and spirit;’ one who ‘walketh in the light as he is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ his Son having cleansed him from all sin.’

(5) “‘This man can now testify to all mankind, ‘I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.’ He is ‘holy, as God who called him is holy,’ both in heart and ‘in all manner of conversation.’ He ‘loveth the Lord his God with all his heart,’ and serveth him ‘with all his strength.’ He ‘loveth his neighbor,’ every man, ‘as himself;’ yea, ‘as Christ loveth us;’ them, in particular, that ‘despitefully use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father.’ Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with ‘bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.’ And his life agreeth thereto, full of ‘the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love.’ And whatsoever he doeth, either in word or deed, he doeth it all in the name,’ in the love and power ‘of the Lord Jesus.’ In a word, he doeth ‘the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.’

(6) “‘This it is to be ‘a perfect man,’ to be sanctified throughout; even ‘to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God,’ to use Archbishop Usher’s words, ‘as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.’ In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to ‘show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.’ O that both we and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity may thus ‘be made perfect in one!’”

13. If there be any thing unscriptural in these words, any thing wild or extravagant, any thing contrary to the analogy of faith or the experience of adult Christians, let them “smite me friendly and reprove me,” let them impart to me of the clearer light God has given them. How knowest thou, O man, “but thou mayest gain thy brother;” but he may at length come to the knowledge of the truth; and thy labor of love, shown forth with meekness of wisdom, may not be in vain?

14. There remains yet another charge against me, that I believe inconsistencies; that my tenets, particularly concerning justification, are contradictory to themselves; that Mr. Wesley, “since his return from Germany, has improved in the spirit of inconsistency.” “For then he published two treatises of Dr. Barnes, the Calvinist, or Dominican rather, who suffered in 1541

(let us spare the ashes of the dead. Were I such a Dominican as he was, I should rejoice too to die in the flames); “the first on ‘justification by faith only,’ the other on ‘the sinfulness of man’s natural will and his utter inability to do works acceptable to God, until he be justified.’ Which principles, if added to his former tenets” (nay, they need not be *added* to them, for they are the very same), “will give the whole a new vein of inconsistency, and make the contradictions more gross and glaring than before.”

15. It will be necessary to speak more largely on this head.

16. (1) It is “asserted that Mr. Law’s system was the creed of the Methodists.” But it is not proved. I had been eight years at Oxford before I read any of Mr. Law’s writings, and when I did I was so far from making them my creed that I had objections to almost every page. But all this time my manner was to spend several hours a day in reading the Scripture in the original tongues. And hence my system, so termed, was wholly drawn, according to the light I then had.

17. It was in my passage to Georgia I met with those teachers who would have taught me the way of God more perfectly. But I understood them not. Neither on my arrival there did they infuse any particularities into me, either about justification or any thing else. For I came back with the same notions I went. And this I have explicitly acknowledged in my second journal, where some of my words are these: “When Peter Böhler, as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ (which is but one), that it had these two fruits inseparably attending it, ‘dominion over sin and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,’ I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had no faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might and labored to prove that faith might be where these were not, especially where that sense of forgiveness was not, for all the Scriptures relating to this I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw no one could (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness and not feel it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.” Vol. iii, p. 73.

18. (2) Yet it was not Peter Böhler who convinced me that conversion (I mean justification) was an instantaneous work. On the contrary, when I was convinced of the nature and fruits

of justifying faith, still "I could not comprehend what he spoke of an instantaneous work. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could at once be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles. But to my utter astonishment I found scarce any instances there of other than instantaneous conversion; scarce any others so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but one retreat left, namely, 'Thus, I grant, God wrought in the first ages of Christianity, but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?'

"But on Sunday, 22, I was beat out of this retreat too by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had thus wrought in themselves, giving them *in a moment* such a faith in the blood of his Son as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help thou my unbelief!'" (Vol. iii, p. 66.) The remaining part of this section, with the third and fourth, contain my own words, to which I still subscribe.

OF THE ASSURANCE OF JUSTIFICATION.

19. I believe that "conversion," meaning thereby justification, is an instantaneous work, and that the moment a man has living faith in Christ he is converted or justified: which faith he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

I believe the moment a man is justified he has peace with God: which he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

Read the words of Michael Linner:

"About fourteen years ago I was more than ever convinced that I was wholly different from what God required me to be. I consulted his word again and again, but it spoke nothing but condemnation; till at last I could not read, nor indeed do any thing else, having no hope and no spirit left in me. I had been in this state for several days when, being musing by myself, those words came strongly into my mind, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' I thought, 'All! Then I am one. Then he is given for me. But I am a sinner, and he came to save sinners.' Immediately my burden dropped off, and my heart was at rest.

"But the full assurance of faith I had not yet, nor for the two years I continued in Moravia. When I was driven out thence by the Jesuits I retired hither, and was soon after received into the church. And here, after some time, it pleased our

Lord to manifest himself more clearly to my soul, and give me that full sense of acceptance in him which excludes all doubt and fear.

"Indeed, the leading of the Spirit is different in different souls. His more usual method, I believe, is to give, in one and the same moment, forgiveness of sins, and a full assurance of that forgiveness. Yet in many he works as he did in me, giving first the remission of sins, and after some weeks, or months, or years, the full assurance of it." (Vol. iii, p. 91.)

All I need observe is that the first sense of forgiveness is often mixed with doubt or fear. But the full assurance of faith excludes all doubt and fear, as the very term implies.

Therefore (to agree with Michael Linner's words), "He may not have till long after the full assurance of faith, which excludes all doubt and fear."

I believe a man is justified at the same time that he is born of God.

And he that is born of God sinneth not.

Which deliverance from sin he cannot have without knowing that he has it.

ADVICE TO THE PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS.

Disce, docendus adhuc quæ censet amicus.—HOR.

["To the instruction of an humble friend,
Who would himself be better taught, attend."—FRANCIS.]

It may be needful to specify whom I mean by this ambiguous term, since it would be lost labor to speak to Methodists, so called, without first describing those to whom I speak.

By Methodists I mean a people who profess to pursue (in whatsoever measure they have attained) holiness of heart and life, inward and outward conformity in all things to the revealed will of God; who place religion in a uniform resemblance of the great object of it, in a steady imitation of Him they worship, in all his imitable perfections, more particularly in justice, mercy, and truth, or universal love filling the heart and governing the life.

You to whom I now speak believe this love of human kind cannot spring but from the love of God. You think there can be no instance of one whose tender affection embraces every child of man (though not endeared to him either by ties of blood or by any natural or civil relation), unless that affection flow from a grateful, filial love to the common Father of all; to God, considered not only as his Father, but as "the Father of the spirits of all flesh;" yea, as the general Parent and Friend of all the families both of heaven and earth.

This filial love you suppose to flow only from faith, which you describe as supernatural evidence (or conviction) of things not seen, so that to him who has this principle:

The things unknown to feeble sense,
Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,
With strong, commanding evidence,
Their heavenly origin display.

Faith lends its realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly,
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye.

You suppose this faith to imply an evidence that God is merciful to me a sinner, that he is reconciled to me by the death of his Son, and now accepts me for his sake. You accordingly describe the faith of a real Christian as "a sure trust and confidence" (over and above his assent to the sacred writings) "which he hath in God, that his sins are forgiven, and that he is, through the merits of Christ, reconciled to the favor of God."

You believe, further, that both this faith and love are wrought in us by the Spirit of God; nay, that there cannot be in any man one good temper or desire, or so much as one good thought, unless it be produced by the almighty power of God, by the inspiration or influence of the Holy Ghost.

If you walk by this rule, continually endeavoring to know and love and resemble and obey the great God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God of love, of pardoning mercy; if from this principle of loving, obedient faith you carefully abstain from all evil, and labor as you have opportunity to do good to all men, friends or enemies; if, lastly, you unite together to encourage and help each other in thus working out your salvation, and for that end watch over one another in love, you are they whom I mean by Methodists.

The first general advice which one who loves your souls would earnestly recommend to every one of you is, "Consider, with deep and frequent attention, the peculiar circumstances wherein you stand."

One of these is that you are a new people; your name is new (at least as used in a religious sense), not heard of till a few years ago, either in our own or any other nation. Your principles are new, in this respect: that there is no other set of people among us (and possibly not in the Christian world) who hold them all in the same degree and connection; who so strenuously and continually insist on the absolute necessity of universal holiness both in heart and life, of a peaceful, joyous love of God, of a supernatural evidence of things not seen, of an inward witness that we are the children of God, and of the inspiration of the Holy

Ghost in order to any good thought or word or work. And perhaps there is no other set of people (at least not visibly united together) who lay so much and yet no more stress than you do on rectitude of opinions, on outward modes of worship, and the use of those ordinances which you acknowledge to be of God. So much stress you lay even on right opinions as to profess that you earnestly desire to have a right judgment in all things, and are glad to use every means which you know or believe may be conducive thereto, and yet not so much as to condemn any man upon earth merely for thinking otherwise than you do, much less to imagine that God condemns him for this if he be upright and sincere of heart. On those outward modes of worship wherein you have been bred up you lay so much stress as highly to approve them, but not so much as to lessen your love to those who conscientiously dissent from you herein. You likewise lay so much stress on the use of those ordinances which you believe to be of God as to confess there is no salvation for you if you willfully neglect them, and yet you do not judge them that are otherwise minded; you determine nothing concerning those who, not believing those ordinances to be of God, do, out of principle, abstain from them.

Your strictness of life, taking the whole of it together, may likewise be accounted new. I mean your making it a rule to abstain from fashionable diversions, from reading plays, romances, or books of humor, from singing innocent songs, or talking in a merry, gay, diverting manner; your plainness of dress, your manner of dealing in trade, your exactness in observing the Lord's day, your scrupulosity as to things that have not paid custom, your total abstinence from spirituous liquors (unless in cases of necessity), your rule, "not to mention the fault of an absent person, in particular of ministers or of those in authority," may justly be termed new; seeing, although some are scrupulous in some of these things and others are strict with regard to other particulars, yet we do not find any other body of people who insist on all these rules together. With respect, therefore, both to your name, principles, and practice, you may be considered as a new people.

Another peculiar circumstance of your present situation is that you are newly united together, that you are just gathered, or (as it seems) gathering rather, out of all other societies or congregations; nay, and that you have been hitherto, and do still subsist, without power (for you are a low, insignificant people), without

riches (for you are poor almost to a man, having no more than the plain necessities of life), and without either any extraordinary gifts of nature or the advantages of education; most even of your teachers being quite unlearned and (in other things) ignorant men.

There is yet another circumstance which is quite peculiar to yourselves: whereas every other religious set of people, as soon as they were joined to each other, separated themselves from their former societies or congregations, you, on the contrary, do not; nay, you absolutely disavow all desire of separating from them. You openly and continually declare you have not, nor ever had, such a design. And whereas the congregations to which those separatists belonged have generally spared no pains to prevent that separation, those to which you belong spare no pains (not to prevent, but) to occasion this separation, to drive you from them, to force you on that division to which you declare you have the strongest aversion.

Considering these peculiar circumstances wherein you stand, you will see the propriety of a second advice I would recommend to you: "Do not imagine you can avoid giving offense:" your very name renders this impossible. Perhaps not one in a hundred of those who use the term *Methodist* have any ideas of what it means. To ninety-nine of them it is still heathen Greek. Only they think it means something very bad—either a papist, a heretic, an underminer of the Church, or some unheard-of monster; and in all probability the farther it goes it must gather up more and more evil. It is vain, therefore, for any that is called a Methodist ever to think of not giving offense.

And as much offense as you give by your name you will give still more by your principles. You will give offense to the bigots for opinions, modes of worship, and ordinances by laying no more stress upon them; to the bigots against them, by laying so much; to men of form, by insisting so frequently and strongly on the inward power of religion; to moral men (so called), by declaring the absolute necessity of faith in order to acceptance with God. To men of reason you will give offense by talking of inspiration and receiving the Holy Ghost; to drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, common swearers, and other open sinners by refraining from their company, as well as by that disapprobation of their behavior which you will often be obliged to express. And, indeed, your life must give them continual offense: your sobriety is grievously offensive to a drunkard; your serious conversation

is equally intolerable to a gay impertinent; and in general that "you are grown so precise and singular, so monstrously strict, beyond all sense and reason, that you scruple so many harmless things, and fancy you are obliged to do so many others which you need not," cannot but be an offense to abundance of people, your friends and relations in particular. Either, therefore, you must consent to give up your principles, or your fond hope of pleasing men.

What makes even your principles more offensive is this uniting of yourselves together, because this union renders you more conspicuous, placing you more in the eye of men; more suspicious—I mean liable to be suspected of carrying on some sinister design (especially by those who do not, or will not, know your inviolable attachment to his present majesty); more dreadful to those of a fearful temper, who imagine you have any such design; and more odious to men of zeal, if their zeal be any other than fervent love to God and man.

This offense will sink the deeper because you are gathered out of so many other congregations; for the warm men in each will not easily be convinced that you do not despise either them or their teachers; nay, will probably imagine that you utterly condemn them as though they could not be saved. And this occasion of offense is now at the height, because you are just gathered, or gathering, rather, so that they know not where it will end; but the fear of losing (so they account it) more of their members gives an edge to their zeal, and keeps all their anger and resentment in its strength.

Add to this that you do not leave them quite; you still rank yourselves among their members, which, to those who know not that you do it for conscience' sake, is also a provoking circumstance. "If you would but get out of their sight!" But you are a continual thorn in their side as long as you remain with them.

And (which cannot but anger them the more) you have neither power, nor riches, nor learning; yet, with all their power and money and wisdom, they can gain no ground against you.

You cannot but expect that the offense continually arising from such a variety of provocations will gradually ripen into hatred, malice, and all other unkind tempers. And as they who are thus affected will not fail to represent you to others in the same light as you appear to them—sometimes as madmen and fools, sometimes as wicked men, fellows not fit to live upon the

earth—the consequence, humanly speaking, must be that, together with your reputation, you will lose, first, the love of your friends, relations, and acquaintances, even those who once loved you the most tenderly; then your business, for many will employ you no longer, nor “buy of such a one as you are;” and in due time (unless He who governs the world interpose) your health, liberty, and life.

What further advice can be given to persons in such a situation? I cannot but advise you, thirdly: “Consider deeply with yourself, Is the God whom I serve able to deliver me? I am not able to deliver myself out of these difficulties, much less am I able to bear them. I know not how to give up my reputation, my friends, my substance, my liberty, my life. Can God give me to rejoice in doing this, and may I depend upon him that he will? Are the hairs of my head all numbered, and does he never fail them that trust in him?” Weigh this thoroughly; and if you can trust God with your all, then go on in the power of his might.

Go on. I would earnestly advise you, fourthly: “Keep in the very path wherein you now tread. Be true to your principles.” Never rest again in the dead formality of religion. Pursue with your might inward and outward holiness, a steady imitation of Him you worship, a still increasing resemblance of his imitable perfections—his justice, mercy, and truth.

Let this be your manly, noble, generous religion, equally remote from the meanness of superstition which places religion in doing what God hath not enjoined, or abstaining from what he hath not forbidden, and from the unkindness of bigotry, which confines our affection to our own party, sect, or opinion. Above all, stand fast in obedient faith; faith in the God of pardoning mercy, in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath loved you and given himself for you. Ascribe to him all the good you find in yourself, all your peace and joy and love, all your power to do and suffer his will, through the Spirit of the living God. Yet, in the meantime, carefully avoid enthusiasm, impute not the dreams of men to the all-wise God, and expect neither light nor power from him but in the serious use of all the means he hath ordained.

Be true also to your principles touching opinions and the externals of religion. Use every ordinance which you believe is of God; but beware of narrowness of spirit toward those who use them not. Conform yourself to those modes of worship which

you approve; yet love as brethren those who cannot conform. Lay so much stress on opinions that all your own, if it be possible, may agree with truth and reason; but have a care of anger, dislike, or contempt toward those whose opinions differ from yours. You are daily accused of this (and, indeed, what is it whereof you are not accused?); but beware of giving any ground for such an accusation. Condemn no man for not thinking as you think: let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself: let every man use his own judgment, since every man must give an account of himself to God. Abhor every approach, in any kind or degree, to the spirit of persecution. If you cannot reason or persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force him into it. If love will not compel him to come in, leave him to God, the Judge of all.

Yet expect not that others will deal thus with you. No: some will endeavor to fright you out of your principles; some to shame you into a more popular religion, to laugh and rally you out of your singularity: but from none of these will you be in so great danger as from those who assault you with quite different weapons; with softness, good-nature, and earnest professions of (perhaps real) good will. Here you are equally concerned to avoid the very appearance of anger, contempt, or unkindness, and to hold fast the whole truth of God, both in principle and in practice.

This indeed will be interpreted as unkindness. Your former acquaintances will look upon this—that you will not sin or trifle with them—as a plain proof of your coldness toward them; and this burden you must be content to bear; but labor to avoid all real unkindness, all disobliging words, or harshness of speech, all shyness, or strangeness of behavior. Speak to them with all the tenderness and love, and behave with all the sweetness and courtesy you can; taking care not to give any needless offense to neighbor or stranger, friend or enemy.

Perhaps on this very account I might advise you, fifthly, “not to talk much of what you suffer; of the persecution you endured at such a time, and the wickedness of your persecutors.” Nothing more tends to exasperate them than this; and therefore (although there is a time when these things must be mentioned, yet) it might be a general rule, to do it as seldom as you can with a safe conscience. For, besides its tendency to inflame them, it has the appearance of evil, of ostentation, of magnifying yourselves. It also tends to puff you up with pride, and to make you

think yourselves some great ones, as it certainly does to excite or increase in your heart ill-will, anger, and all unkind tempers. It is, at best, loss of time; for, instead of the wickedness of men, you might be talking of the goodness of God. Nay, it is, in truth, an open, willful sin; it is tale-bearing, backbiting, evil speaking, a sin you can never be sufficiently watchful against, seeing it steals upon you in a thousand shapes. Would it not be far more profitable for your souls, instead of speaking against them, to pray for them? to confirm your love toward those unhappy men, whom you believe to be fighting against God, by crying mightily to him in their behalf, that he may open their eyes and change their hearts?

I have now only to commend you to the care of Him who hath all power in heaven and in earth; beseeching Him that, in every circumstance of life, you may stand "firm as the beaten anvil to the stroke;" desiring nothing on earth; accounting all things but dung and dross, that you may win Christ; and always remembering, "It is the part of a good champion to be flayed alive, and to conquer!"

OCTOBER 10, 1745.

THE MORAL STATE OF MANKIND.

(Written November 30, 1756.)

BEFORE we attempt to account for any fact, we should be well assured of the fact itself. First, therefore, let us inquire, What is the real state of mankind with regard to knowledge and virtue wherein mankind have been from the earliest times? And what state are they in at this day?

1. What is the state (to begin with the former branch of the inquiry), with regard to knowledge and virtue, wherein, according to the most authentic accounts, mankind have been from the earliest times? We have no authentic account of the state of mankind in the times antecedent to the deluge but in the writings of Moses. What, then, according to these, was the state of mankind in those times? Moses gives us an exact and full account: God then "saw that the wickedness of man was great, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. vi, 5, 12, 13). And this was not the case of only part of mankind; but "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth:" and accordingly God said, "The end of all flesh

is come, for the earth is filled with violence through them." Only Noah was "righteous before God" (Gen. vii, 1). Therefore only he and his household were spared when God "brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly," and destroyed them all from the face of the earth.

"Let us examine the most distinguishing features in this draught. Not barely the works of their hands, or the words of their tongue, but 'every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was evil.' The contagion had spread itself through the inner man; had tainted the seat of their principles, and the source of their actions. But was there not some mixture of good? No; they were only evil: not so much as a little leaven of piety, unless in one single family. But were there no lucid intervals; no happy moments wherein virtue gained the ascendancy? None; every imagination, every thought was only evil continually." (Mr. Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio*; Dial. 11.)

2. Such was the state of mankind for at least sixteen hundred years. Men were corrupting themselves and each other, and proceeding from one degree of wickedness to another, till they were all (save eight persons) ripe for destruction. So deplorable was the state of the moral world, while the natural was in its highest perfection. And yet it is highly probable that the inhabitants of the earth were then abundantly more numerous than ever they have been since, considering the length of their lives, falling little short of a thousand years, and the strength and vigor of their bodies, which we may easily gather from the time they were to continue; to say nothing of the fertility of the earth, probably far greater than it is at present. Consequently, it was then capable of sustaining such a number of inhabitants as could not now subsist on the produce of it.

3. Let us next take a view of the "families of the sons of Noah," the inhabitants of the earth after the flood. The first remarkable incident we read concerning them is, that while "they were all of one language, they said one to another, Let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth." It is not easy to determine what were the peculiar aggravations which attended this attempt. But it is certain there was daring wickedness therein, which brought upon them the very thing they feared; for "the Lord," by "confounding their language" (not their religious worship: can we suppose God would confound this)? "scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth" (Gen. xi, 4, 9). Now, whatever particulars in this account may be variously interpreted, thus much is clear and undeniable: that all these, that is, all the inhabitants of the earth, had again "corrupted their

way;" the universal wickedness being legible in the universal punishment.

4. We have no account of their reforming their ways, of any universal or general repentance, before God separated Abraham to himself, to be the father of his chosen people (Gen. xii, 1, 2). Nor is there any reason to believe that the rest of mankind were improved either in wisdom or virtue when "Lot and Abraham separated themselves, and Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom" (Gen. xiii, 11, 12). Of those among whom he dwelt it is particularly remarked, "The men of Sodom" (and of all "the cities of the plain") "were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Gen. xiii, 13); so that not even "ten righteous persons" could be found among them: the consequence of which was, that "the Lord rained upon them brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (Gen. xix, 24).

5. We have no ground to suppose that the other inhabitants of the earth (Abraham, with his family and descendants, excepted) had either the knowledge or the fear of God, from that time till Jacob "went into Egypt." This was then, as well as for several ages after, the great seat of learning; insomuch that "the wisdom of the Egyptians" was celebrated even to a proverb. And indeed for this end, as well as "to save much people alive" (Gen. l, 20), did "God send Joseph into Egypt," even "to inform their princes after his will, and to teach their senators wisdom." And yet not long after his death, as their king "knew not Joseph," so his people knew not God. Yea, they set him at defiance: they and their king provoked him more and more, and "hardened their hearts" against him; even after they had "seen his wonders in Egypt," after they had groaned under his repeated vengeance. They still added sin to sin, till they constrained the Lord to destroy them with an utter destruction; till the divided "waters returned, and covered the chariots and horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh."

6. Nor were the other nations who then inhabited the earth any better than the Egyptians; the true knowledge and spiritual worship of God being confined to the descendants of Abraham. "He had not dealt so with other nations, neither had the heathen knowledge of his laws" (Psa. cxlvii, 20). And in what state were the Israelites themselves? How did they worship the God of their fathers? Why, even these were "a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that set not their heart aright. They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his

law. They provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea" (Psa. lxxviii, 8, 10, cvi, 7; Exod. xiv, 11, 12); the very place where he had so signally delivered them. "They made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped the molten image" (Psa. cvi, 19), where they had heard the Lord, but a little before, saying, out of the midst of the fire, "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them." And how amazing was their behavior during those whole forty years that they sojourned in the wilderness! even while he "led them in the day-time with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire" (Psa. lxxviii, 14). Such were the knowledge and virtue of God's peculiar people (certainly the most knowing and virtuous nation which was then to be found upon the face of the earth), till God brought them into the land of Canaan; considerably more than two thousand years from the creation of the world.

None, I presume, will say there was any other nation at that time more knowing and more virtuous than the Israelites. None can say this while he professes to believe, according to the scriptural account, that Israel was then under a theocracy; under the immediate government of God; that he conversed with their subordinate governor "face to face, as a man talketh with his friend;" and that God was daily, through him, conveying such instructions to them as they were capable of receiving.

7. Shall we turn our eyes for a moment from the scriptural to the profane account of mankind in the earliest ages? What was the general sentiment of the most polite and knowing nation, the Romans, when their learning was in its utmost perfection? Let one, who certainly was no bigot or enthusiast, speak for the rest. And he speaks home to the point:

*Nam fuit ante Helenam cunus teterrima belli
Causa; sed ignotis perierunt mortibus omnes
Quos venerem incertam rapientes more ferarum
Viribus editior cedeabat, ut in grege taurus.*

"Full many a war has been for women waged
Ere half the world in Helen's cause engaged;
But, unrecorded in historic verse,
Obscurely died those savage ravishers,
Who like brute beasts the female bore away
Till some superior brute re-seized the prey:
As a wild bull, his rival bull o'erthrown,
Claims the whole subject herd, and reigns alone."

I doubt he who gives this, not as his peculiar opinion, but as

what was then a generally received notion, would scarce have allowed even so much as Juvenal,

*Pudicitiam Saturno rege moratam
In terris. . . .*

“Chastity did once, I grant, remain
On earth, and flourish’d in old Saturn’s reign:”

Unless one should suppose the reign of Saturn to have expired when Adam was driven out of Paradise.

I cannot forbear adding another picture of the ancient dignity of human nature, drawn by the same masterly hand. Before men dwelt in cities, he says, this

*Turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus et pugnis, dein fustibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ post fabricaverat usus.*

“The human herd, unbroken and untaught,
For acorns first, and grassy couches fought;
With fists, and then with clubs maintain’d the fray,
Till, urged by hate, they found a quicker way,
And forged pernicious arms, and learn’d the art to slay.”

What a difference is there between this and the gay, florid accounts which many moderns give of their own species!

8. But to return to more authentic accounts: At the time when God brought the Israelites into Canaan in what state were the rest of mankind? Doubtless in nearly the same with the Canaanites, with the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and the rest of the seven nations. But the wickedness of these, we know, was full; they were corrupt in the highest degree. All manner of vice, all ungodliness and unrighteousness, reigned among them without control; and therefore the wise and just governor of the world gave them up to a swift and total destruction.

9. Of Israel, indeed, we read, that they “served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua” (Josh. xxiv, 31). And yet even at that time they did not serve him alone; they were not free from gross idolatry; otherwise, there had been no need of his giving them that exhortation a little before his death: “Now, therefore, put away the strange gods which are among you,” the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river Jordan, verse 23. What gods these were, we learn by the words of Amos, cited by St. Stephen: “O ye house of Israel, have ye offered sacrifices to me by the space of forty years? Yea, ye took up the taber-

nacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them" (Acts vii, 42, 43).

10. The sacred history of what occurred within a short space after the death of Joshua, for some hundred years, even until the time that Samuel judged Israel, gives us a large account of their astonishing wickedness during almost that whole period. It is true, just "when God smote them, then they sought him; they returned and inquired after God." Yet "their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant" (Psa. lxxviii, 34, 37). And we find little alteration among them for the better in the succeeding ages, insomuch that in the reign of Ahab, about nine hundred years before Christ, there were only "seven thousand left in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kings xix, 18). What manner of men they were for the next three hundred years we may learn from the books of the Kings and from the prophets, whence it fully appears that, except a few short intervals, they were given up to all manner of abominations, by reason of which the name of the Most High was the more abundantly blasphemed among the heathens. And this continued until their open rebellion against God brought upon the whole nation of the Jews (a hundred and thirty-four years after the captivity of the ten tribes, and about six hundred before Christ) those terrible and long-deserved calamities which made them a spectacle to all that were round about them. The writings of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah leave us no room to think that they were reformed by those calamities. Nor was there any lasting reformation in the time of Ezra, or of Nehemiah and Malachi; but they were still, as their forefathers had been, "a faithless and stubborn generation." Such were they likewise, as we may gather from the books of Maccabees and Josephus, to the very time when Christ came into the world.

11. Our blessed Lord has given us a large description of those who were then the most eminent for religion: "Ye devour," says he, "widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Ye make" your proselytes "twofold more the children of hell than yourselves. Ye neglect the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. Ye make clean the outside of the cup, but within are full of extortion and excess. Ye are like whited sepulchres, outwardly beautiful, but within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell!" (Matt. xxiii, 14, etc.) And to these very men, after they had murdered the Just One, his

faithful follower declared, "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts vii, 51). And so they continued to do until the wrath of God did indeed "come upon them to the uttermost;" until eleven hundred thousand of them were destroyed, their city and temple leveled with the dust, and above ninety thousand sold for slaves and scattered into all lands.

12. Such in all generations were the lineal children of Abraham, who had so unspeakable advantages over the rest of mankind, "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;" among whom, therefore, we may reasonably expect to find the greatest eminence of knowledge and virtue. If these then were so stupidly, brutishly ignorant, so desperately wicked, what can we expect from the heathen world, from them who had not the knowledge either of his law or promises? Certainly we cannot expect to find more goodness among them. But let us make a fair and impartial inquiry, and that not among wild and barbarous nations, but the most civilized and refined. What, then, were the ancient Romans? the people whose virtue is so highly extolled, and so warmly commended to our imitation? We have their character given by one who cannot deceive or be deceived—the unerring Spirit of God. And what account does he give of these best of men, these heroes of antiquity? "When they knew God," says he, at least as to his eternity and power (both implied in that appellation which occurs more than once in their own poet, *Pater omnipotens*, "Almighty Father"), "they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful" (Rom. i, 21, etc.). So far from it that one of their oracles of wisdom (though once he stumbled on that great truth, *Nemo unquam vir magnus sine afflatu divino fuit*, "There never was any great man without the afflatus or inspiration of God;" yet almost in the same breath) does not scruple to ask, *Quis pro virtute aut sapientiâ gratias diis dedit unquam?* "Who ever thanked God for virtue or wisdom?" No; why should he? since these are "his own acquisition, the pure result of his own industry." Accordingly, another virtuous Roman has left it on record as an unquestioned maxim,

Hæc satis est orare Jovem, quæ donat et aufert:

Det vitam, det opes; æquum nâ animum ipse parabo.

"Enough for common benefits to pray,
Which Jove can neither give or take away;
Long life or wealth his bounty may bestow;
Wisdom and virtue to myself I owe."

So "vain" were they become "in their imaginations!" So were their "foolish hearts darkened!" (Rom. i, 21, etc.)

13. But this was only the first step; they did not stop here. "Professing themselves wise," they yet sunk into such gross, astonishing folly, as to "change the glory of the incorruptible God" (whom they might have known, even from their own writers, to be

Vastem

Mens agitans molem, et magno se copore miscens,

"The all-informing soul

That fills the mighty mass, and moves the whole"),

"into an image made like to corruptible man; yea, to birds, to beasts, to creeping things!" What wonder was it, then, that, after they had thus "changed his glory into an image, God gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves?" How justly when they had "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator," did he "for this cause," punishing sin by sin, "give them up unto vile affections! For even the women did change the natural use into that which is against nature." Yea, the modest, honorable Roman matrons (so little were they ashamed!) wore their *priapi* [emblems of the god of obscenity] openly on their breasts. "And likewise the men burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly." What an amazing testimony of this is left us on record, even by the most modest of all the Roman poets!

Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexim!

How does this pattern of heathen chastity avow without either fear or shame, as if it were an innocent, at least, if not laudable, passion, their "burning in lust one toward another!" And did men of the finest taste in the nation censure the song, or the subject of it? We read nothing of this; on the contrary, the universal honor and esteem paid to the writer, and that by persons of the highest rank, plainly shows that the case of Corydon, as it was not uncommon in any part of the Roman dominions, so it was not conceived to be any blemish either to him or his master, but an innocent infirmity.

Meantime, how delicate an idea of love had this favorite of Rome and of the Muses! Hear him explaining himself a little more fully on this tender point:

*Elæu! quàm pingui macer est mihi taurus in agro!
Idem amor exitium est pecori, pecorisque magistro.*

Idem amor! The same love in the bull and in the man! What elegance of sentiment! Is it possible any thing can exceed this? One would imagine nothing could, had not the same chaste poet furnished us with yet another scene more abundantly shocking than this:

Pasiphæen nivei solatur amore juvenei!

“He comforts Pasiphæe with the love of her milk-white bull!” *Nihil supra!* [The capsheaf!] The condoling a woman on her successful amour with a bull, shows a brutality which nothing can exceed! How justly then does the apostle add, as “they did not like,” or desire, “to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to an undiscerning mind to do those things which are not convenient!” In consequence of this they were “filled with all unrighteousness,” vice of every kind and in every degree; in particular “with fornication” (taking the word in its largest sense as including every sin of the kind), “with wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, with envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity;” being “haters of God,” the true God, the God of Israel, to whom they allowed no place among all their herd of deities; “despiteful, proud, boasters,” in as eminent a degree as ever was any nation under heaven; “inventors of evil things,” in great abundance, of *mille nocendi artes* [a thousand destructive arts], both in peace and war; “disobedient to parents,”—although duty to these is supposed to be inscribed on the hearts of the most barbarous nations; “covenant breakers,” even of those of the most solemn kind, those wherein the public faith was engaged by their supreme magistrate; which, notwithstanding, they made no manner of scruple of breaking whenever they saw good, only coloring over their perfidiousness by giving those magistrates into their hands with whom the “covenant” was made. And what was this to the purpose? Is the King of France, or the republic of Holland, at liberty to violate their most solemn treaties at pleasure, provided they give up to the King of England the ambassador or general by whom that treaty was made? What would all Europe have said of the late czar if, instead of punctually performing the engagements made with the Porte when in his distress, he had only given up the persons by whom he transacted, and immediately broke through them all? There is, therefore, no room to say,

*Modo Punica scripla supersint,
Non minus infamis forte Latina fides.*

"Perhaps, if the Carthaginian writings were extant, Roman faith would be as infamous as Punic." We need them not. In vain have they destroyed the Carthaginian writings, for their own sufficiently testify of them, and fully prove that in perfidy the natives of Carthage could not exceed the senate and people of Rome.

14. They were as a nation *αστοργοι*, void of natural affection, even to their own bowels. Witness the universal custom which obtained for several ages in Rome and all its dependencies (as it had done before through all the cities of Greece), when in their highest repute for wisdom and virtue, of exposing their own newborn children, more or fewer of them as every man pleased, when he had as many as he thought good to keep; throwing them out to perish by cold and hunger, unless some more merciful wild beast shortened their pain and provided them a sepulcher. Nor do I remember a single Greek or Roman, of all those that occasionally mention it, ever complaining of this diabolical custom or fixing the least touch of blame upon it. Even the tender mother in Terrence, who had some compassion for her helpless infant, does not dare to acknowledge it to her husband without that remarkable preface, *Ut miserè supersticiosæ sumus omnes*, "As we women are all miserably superstitious."

15. I would desire those gentlemen who are so very severe upon the Israelites for killing the children of the Canaanites at their entrance into the land of Canaan, to spend a few thoughts on this. Not to insist that the Creator is the absolute Lord and Proprietor of the lives of all his creatures; that, as such, he may at any time, without the least injustice, take away the life which he has given; that he may do this in whatsoever manner and by whatever instruments he pleases, and consequently may inflict death on any creature by whom he pleases, without any blame either to him or them; not to insist, I say, on this or many other things which might be offered, let us at present fix on this single consideration: the Israelites destroyed the children for some weeks or months, the Greeks and Romans for above a thousand years. The one put them out of their pain at once, doubtless by the shortest and easiest way; the others were not so compassionate as to cut their throats, but left them to pine away by a lingering death. Above all, the Hebrews destroyed only the children of their enemies, the Romans destroyed their own. O fair pattern indeed! Where shall we find a parallel to this virtue? I read of a modern who took up a child that fell from its mother's womb, and threw it back into the flames. (Pure, genuine human nature!) And reason good, for it

was the child of a heretic. But what evil, ye worthies of ancient Rome, did ye find in your own children? I must still say this is without a parallel even in papal history.

16. They were *implacable, unmerciful*. Witness (one or two instances of ten thousand) poor gray-headed Hannibal (whom, very probably, had we any other accounts of him than those which were given by his bitterest enemies, we should have revered as one of the most amiable of men, as well as the most valiant of all the ancient heathens), hunted from nation to nation, and never quitted till he fell by his own hand. Witness the famous suffrage, *Delenda est Carthago*—"Let Carthage be destroyed." Why? It was *imperii æmula*—"the rival of the Roman glory." These were open, undeniable evidences of the public, national placability and mercy of the Romans. Need instances of a more private nature be added? Behold, then, one for all, in that glory of Rome, that prodigy of virtue, the great, the celebrated Cato. Cato the Elder, when any of his domestics had worn themselves out in his service, and grew decrepit with age, constantly turned them out to starve, and was much applauded for his frugality in so doing. But what mercy was this? Just such as that which dwelt in Cato of Utica, who repaid the tenderness of his servant endeavoring to save his life, to prevent his tearing open his wound, by striking him on the face with such violence as to fill his mouth with blood. These are thy gods, O Deism! These the patterns so zealously recommended to our imitation!

17. And what was the real character of that hero whom Cato himself so admired? whose cause he espoused with such eagerness, with such unwearied diligence? of Pompey the Great? Surely never did any man purchase that title at so cheap a rate! What made him great? The villany of Perpenna and the treachery of Pharnaces. Had not the one murdered his friend, the other rebelled against his father, where had been Pompey's greatness? So this stalking horse of a party procured his reputation in the commonwealth. And when it was procured how did he use it? Let his own poet Lucan speak:

*Nec quenquam jam ferre potest Cæsarre priorem,
Pompeiusve parem.*

"Nor Cæsar could to a superior look;
Nor patriot Pompey could an equal brook."

He would bear no equal! And this a senator of Rome! Nay, the grand patron of the republic! But what a republican him-

self, when this principle was the spring of all his designs and actions! Indeed, a less amiable character it is not easy to find among all the great men of antiquity; ambitious, vain, haughty, surly, and overbearing beyond the common rate of men. And what virtue had he to balance these faults? I can scarce find one, even in Lucan's account. It does not appear that in the latter part of his life he had even military virtues. What proof did he give of personal courage in all his war with Cæsar? What instances of eminent conduct? None at all, if we may credit his friend Cicero, who complains heavily to Atticus that he acted like a madman, and would ruin the cause he had undertaken to defend.

* 18. Let none therefore look for placability or mercy in Pompey. But was there any unmercifulness in Cæsar?

"Who than Julius hopes to rise
More brave, more generous, or more wise?"

Of his courage and sense there can be no doubt. And much may be said with regard to his contest with Pompey, even for the justice of his cause; for with him he certainly fought for life rather than glory; of which he had the strongest conviction (though he was ashamed to own it) when he passed the Rubicon. Nor can it be doubted but he was often merciful. It is no proof to the contrary that he rode up and down his ranks during the battle of Pharsalia, and cried to those who were engaged with the pretty gentlemen of Pompey's army, "*Miles, faciem feri*"—"Soldiers, strike at the face"—for this greatly shortened the dispute with those who were more afraid of losing their beauty than their lives, and so prevented the effusion of much blood. But I cannot get over (to say nothing of the myriads of common Gauls whom he destroyed) a short sentence in his own Commentaries, "*Vercingetorix per tormenta necatus*"—"Vercingetorix tortured to death." Who was this Vercingetorix? As brave a man and (considering his years) as great a general as even Cæsar. What was his crime? The love of his parents, wife, children, country, and sacrificing all things in defense of them. And how did Cæsar treat him on this account? "He tortured him to death." O Roman mercy! Did not Brutus and Cassius avenge Vercingetorix rather than Pompey? How well was Rome represented in the prophetic vision by that beast, "dreadful and terrible," which had "great iron teeth, and devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped under his feet" all other kingdoms!

II. 1. Such is the state, with regard to knowledge and virtue, wherein, according to the most authentic accounts, mankind was from the earliest times for above four thousand years. Such nearly did it continue during the decline and since the destruction of the Roman Empire. But we will waive all that is past if it only appears that mankind is virtuous and wise at this day. This, then, is the point we are at present to consider: are men in general now wise and virtuous?

Our ingenious countryman, Mr. Brerewood, after his most careful and laborious inquiries, computes that, supposing that part of the earth which we know to be inhabited were divided into thirty equal parts, nineteen of these are heathen still, and of the remaining eleven six are Mohammedan, and only five Christian. Let us take as fair and impartial a survey as we can, of the heathens first and then of the Mohammedans and Christians.

2. And, first, of the heathens. What manner of men are these as to virtue and knowledge at this day? Many of late, who still bear the Christian name, have entertained very honorable thoughts of the old heathens. They cannot believe them to have been so stupid and senseless as they have been represented to be, particularly with regard to idolatry, in worshiping birds, beasts, and creeping things; much less can they credit the stories told of many nations, the Egyptians in particular,

Who are said to
Have set the leek they after prayed to.

But if they do not consider who they are that transmit to us these accounts, namely, both those writers who they profess to believe spake "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and those whom perhaps they value more, the most credible of their contemporary heathens; if, I say, they forget this do they not consider the present state of the heathen world? Now, allowing the bulk of the ancient heathens (which itself is not easily proved) to have had as much understanding as the modern, we have no pretense to suppose they had more. What, therefore, they were we may safely gather from what they are; we may judge of the past by the present. We would know, then (to begin with a part of the world known to very early antiquity), what manner of men the heathens in Africa were two or three thousand years ago. Inquire what they are now, who are genuine pagans still, not tainted with Mohammedanism or Christianity. They are to be found in abundance, either in Negroland or round the Cape of Good Hope. Now what measure of knowledge have the

natives of these countries? I do not say in metaphysics, mathematics, or astronomy. Of these it is plain they know just as much as their four-footed brethren; the lion and the man are equally accomplished with regard to this knowledge. I will not ask what they know of the nature of government, of the respective rights of kings and various orders of subjects; in this regard a herd of men are manifestly inferior to a herd of elephants. But let us view them with respect to common life. What do they know of the things they continually stand in need of? How do they build habitations for themselves and their families; how select and prepare their food; clothe and adorn their persons? As to their habitations, it is certain, I will not say our horses (particularly those belonging to the nobility and gentry), but an English peasant's dogs, nay, his very swine, are more commodiously lodged; and as to their food, apparel, and ornaments, they are just suitable to their edifices:

Your nicer Hottentots think meet
With guts and tripe to deck their feet.
With downcast eyes on Totta's legs,
The love-sick youth most humbly begs
She would not from his sight remove
At once his breakfast and his love.

Such is the knowledge of these accomplished animals in things which cannot but daily employ their thoughts, and wherein, consequently, they cannot avoid exerting to the uttermost both their natural and acquired understanding.

And what are their present attainments in virtue? Are they not, one and all, "without God in the world?" having either no knowledge of him at all, no conception of any thing he has to do with them or they with him, or such conceptions as are far worse than none, as make him such a one as themselves. And what are their social virtues? What are their dispositions and behavior between man and man? Are they eminent for justice, for mercy, or truth? As to mercy, they know not what it means, being continually cutting each other's throats from generation to generation, and selling for slaves as many of those who fall into their hands as, on that consideration only, they do not murder. Justice they have none; no courts of justice at all, no public method of redressing wrong; but every man does what is right in his own eyes, till a stronger than he beats out his brains for so doing. And they have just as much regard to truth; cozening, cheating, and overreaching every man that believes a

word they say. Such are the moral, such the intellectual perfections, according to the latest and most accurate accounts of the present heathens, who are diffused in great numbers over a fourth part of the known world.

3. It is true that in the new world, in America, they seem to breathe a purer air, and to be in general men of a stronger understanding and a less savage temper. Among these, then, we may surely find higher degrees of knowledge as well as virtue. But in order to form a just conception of them we must not take our account from their enemies, from any that would justify themselves by blackening those whom they seek to destroy. No; but let us inquire of more impartial judges concerning those whom they have personally known—the Indians bordering upon our own settlements, from New England down to Georgia.

We cannot learn that there is any great difference, in point of knowledge, between any of these, from east to west, or from north to south. They are all equally unacquainted with European learning, being total strangers to every branch of literature, having not the least conception of any part of philosophy, speculative or practical. Neither have they (whatever accounts some have given) any such thing as a regular civil government among them. They have no laws of any kind, unless a few temporary rules made in and for the time of war. They are likewise utter strangers to the arts of peace, having scarce any such thing as an artificer in a nation. They know nothing of building, having only poor, miserable, ill-contrived huts far inferior to many English dog kennels. Their clothing, till of late, was only skins of beasts, commonly of deer, hanging down before and behind them. Now, among those who have commerce with our nation, it is frequently a blanket wrapped about them. Their food is equally delicate—pounded Indian corn, sometimes mixed with water, and so eaten at once; sometimes kneaded into cakes, meal and bran together, and half baked upon the coals. Fish or flesh dried in the sun is frequently added to this, and now and then a piece of tough, fresh-killed deer.

Such is the knowledge of the Americans, whether in things of an abstruser nature or in the affairs of common life. And this, so far as we can learn, is the condition of all without any considerable difference. But in point of religion there is a very material difference between the northern and southern Indians—those in the north are idolaters of the lowest kind. If they do not worship the devil, appearing in person (which many firmly believe

they do, many think incredible), certainly they worship the most vile and contemptible idols. It were more excusable if they only "turned the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man;" yea, or "of birds, or four-footed beasts, or reptiles," or any creature which God has made. But their idols are more horrid and deformed than any thing in the visible creation, and their whole worship is at once the highest affront to the divine and disgrace to the human nature.

On the contrary, the Indians of our southern provinces do not appear to have any worship at all. By the most diligent inquiry from those who had spent many years among them, I could never learn that any of the Indian nations who border on Georgia and Carolina have any public worship of any kind, nor any private; for they have no idea of prayer. It is not without much difficulty that one can make any of them understand what is meant by prayer, and when they do they cannot be made to apprehend that God will answer or even hear it. They say, "He that sitteth in heaven is too high; he is too far off to hear us." In consequence of which they leave him to himself and manage their affairs without him. Only the Chickasaws, of all the Indian nations, are an exception to this.

I believe it will be found, on the strictest inquiry, that the whole body of southern Indians, as they have no letters and no laws, so, properly speaking, have no religion at all, so that every one does what he sees good, and if it appears wrong to his neighbor, he usually comes upon him unawares, and shoots or scalps him alive. They are likewise all (I could never find any exception) gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars. They are *implacable*, never forgiving an injury or affront, or being satisfied with less than blood. They are *unmerciful*, killing all whom they take prisoners in war with the most exquisite tortures. They are murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children, it being a common thing for a son to shoot his father or mother because they are old and past labor; and for a woman either to procure abortion, or to throw her child into the next river, because she will go to the war with her husband. Indeed, husbands, properly speaking, they have none, for any man leaves his wife, so called, at pleasure, who frequently in return cuts the throats of all the children she has had by him.

The Chickasaws alone seem to have some notion of an intercourse between man and a superior Being. They speak much of

their *beloved ones*, with whom they say they converse both day and night. But their *beloved ones* teach them to eat and drink from morning to night, and, in a manner, from night to morning, for they rise at any hour of the night when they wake, and eat and drink as much as they can, and sleep again. Their beloved ones likewise expressly command them to torture and burn all their prisoners. Their manner of doing it is this: they hold lighted canes to their arms and legs, and several parts of their body, for some time, and then for a while take them away. They also stick burning pieces of wood in their flesh, in which condition they keep them from morning to evening. Such are at present the knowledge and virtue of the native heathens over another fourth of the known world.

4. In Asia, however, we are informed that the case is widely different. For although the heathens bordering on Europe, the thousands and myriads of Tartars, have not much to boast either as to knowledge or virtue, and although the numerous little nations under the Mogul, who retain their original heathenism, are nearly on a level with them, as are the inhabitants of the many large and populous islands in the eastern seas, yet we hear high encomiums of the Chinese, who are as numerous as all these together; some late travelers assuring us that China alone has fifty-eight millions of inhabitants. Now these have been described as men of the deepest penetration, the highest learning, and the strictest integrity; and such doubtless they are, at least with regard to their understanding, if we will believe their own proverb, "The Chinese have two eyes, the Europeans one, and other men none at all."

And one circumstance, it must be owned, is much in their favor, they live some thousand miles off, so that if it were affirmed, that every Chinese had literally three eyes, it would be difficult for us to disprove it. Nevertheless, there is room to doubt even of their understanding; nay, one of the arguments often brought to prove the greatness, to me clearly demonstrates the littleness of it; namely, the thirty thousand letters of their alphabet. To keep an alphabet of thirty hundred letters could never be reconciled to common sense, since every alphabet ought to be as short, simple, and easy as possible. No more can we reconcile to any degree of common sense their crippling all the women in the empire by a silly, senseless affectation of squeezing their feet till they bear no proportion to their bodies, so that the feet of a woman at thirty must still be as small as they would be

naturally when four years old. But in order to see the true measure of their understanding in the clearest light, let us look not at woman, or the vulgar, but at the nobility, the wisest, the politest part of the nation. Look at the mandarins, the glory of the empire, and see any, every one of them at his meals, not deigning to use his own hands, but having his meat put into his mouth by two servants, planted for that purpose one on his right hand, the other on his left. O the deep understanding of the noble lubber that sits in the midst and

Hiat, ceu pullus hirundinis!

"Gapes, as the young swallow, for his food."

Surely, an English plowman or a Dutch sailor would have too much sense to endure it. If you say, "Nay, the mandarin would not endure it but that *it is a custom*," I answer, undoubtedly it is. But how came it to be a custom? Such a custom could not have begun, much less have become general, but through a general and marvelous want of common sense.

What their learning is now I know not, but, notwithstanding their boast of its antiquity, it was certainly very low and contemptible in the last century, when they were so astonished at the skill of the French Jesuits, and honored them as almost more than human for calculating eclipses; and whatever progress they may have made since in the knowledge of astronomy and other curious, rather than useful sciences, it is certain they are still utterly ignorant of what it most of all concerns them to know. They know not God any more than the Hottentots; they are all idolaters, to a man; and so tenacious are they of their national idolatry that even those whom the French missionaries called converts yet continued one and all to worship Confucius and the souls of their ancestors. It is true that when this was strongly represented at Rome by an honest Dominican, who came from thence, a bull was issued out and sent over into China forbidding them to do it any longer. But the good fathers kept it privately among themselves, saying the Chinese were not able to bear it.

Such is their religion with respect to God; but are they not eminent for all social virtues, all that have place between man and man? Yes; according to the accounts which some have given. According to these, they are the glory of mankind, and may be a pattern to all Europe. But have not we some reason to doubt if these accounts are true? Are pride and laziness good ingredients of social virtue? And can all Europe equal

either the laziness or pride of the Chinese nobility and gentry, who are too stately or too indolent even to put the meat into their own mouths? Yet they are not too proud or too indolent to oppress, to rob, to defraud all that fall into their hands. How flagrant instances of this may any one find even in the account of Lord Anson's voyage, exactly agreeing with the accounts given by all our countrymen who have traded in any part of China, as well as with the observation made by a late writer in his *Geographical Grammar*: "Trade and commerce, or rather cheating and overreaching, is the natural bent and genius of the Chinese. Gain is their god; they prefer this to every thing besides. A stranger is in great danger of being cheated if he trusts to his own judgment; and if he employs a Chinese broker, it is well if he does not join with the merchant to cheat the stranger.

"Their laws oblige them to certain rules of civility in their words and actions, and they are naturally a fawning, cringing generation, but the greatest hypocrites on the face of the earth."

5. Such is the boasted virtue of those who are, beyond all degrees of comparison, the best and wisest of all the heathens in Asia. And how little preferable to them are those in Europe! rather how many degrees beneath them! Vast numbers of these are within the borders of Muscovy, but how amazingly ignorant! How totally void both of civil and sacred wisdom. How shockingly savage both in their tempers and manners! Their idolatry is of the basest and vilest kind. They not only worship the work of their own hands, but idols of the most horrid and detestable forms that men or devils could devise. Equally savage (or more so if more can be), as is well known, are the natives of Lapland, and, indeed, of all the countries which have been discovered to the north of Muscovy or Sweden. In truth, the bulk of these nations seem to be considerably more barbarous, not only than the men near the Cape of Good Hope, but than many tribes in the brute creation.

Thus have we seen what is the present state of the heathens in every part of the known world, and these still make up, according to the preceding calculation, very near two thirds of mankind. Let us now calmly and impartially consider what manner of men the Mohammedans in general are.

6. An ingenious writer, who a few years ago published a pompous translation of the Koran, takes great pains to give us a very favorable opinion both of Mohammed and his followers,

but he cannot wash the Ethiop white. After all, men who have but a moderate share of reason cannot but observe in his Koran, even as polished by Mr. Sale, the most gross and impious absurdities. To cite particulars is not now my business; it may suffice to observe, in general, that human understanding must be debased to an inconceivable degree in those who can swallow such absurdities as divinely revealed. And yet we know the Mohammedans not only condemn all who cannot swallow them to everlasting fire, not only appropriate to themselves the title of Mussulmans, or true believers, but even anathematize with the utmost bitterness, and adjudge to eternal destruction, all their brethren of the sect of Hali; all who contend for a figurative interpretation of them.

That these men, then, have no knowledge or love of God is undeniably manifest, not only from their gross, horrible notions of him, but from their not loving their brethren. But they have not always so weighty a cause to hate and murder one another as difference of opinion. Mohammedans will butcher each other by thousands without so plausible a plea as this. Why is it that such numbers of Turks and Persians have stabbed one another in cool blood? Truly, because they differ in the manner of dressing their head. The Ottoman vehemently maintains (for he has unquestionable tradition on his side) that a Mussulman should wear a round turban, whereas the Persian insists upon his liberty of conscience, and will wear it picked before. So for this wonderful reason, when a more plausible one is wanting, they beat out each other's brains from generation to generation.

It is not therefore strange that ever since the religion of Mohammed appeared in the world, the espousers of it, particularly those under the Turkish emperor, have been as wolves and tigers to all other nations, rending and tearing all that fell into their merciless paws, and grinding them with their iron teeth; that numberless cities are razed from the foundation, and only their name remaining; that many countries which were once as the garden of God are now a desolate wilderness; and that so many once numerous and powerful nations are vanished away from the earth. Such was, and is at this day, the rage, the fury, the revenge, of these destroyers of human kind.

7. Proceed we now to the Christian world. But we must not judge of Christians in general from those who are scattered through the Turkish dominions, the Armenian, Georgian, Mongrelian Christians, nor, indeed, from any others of the Greek com-

munion. The gross, barbarous ignorance, the deep, stupid superstition, the blind and bitter zeal, and the endless thirst after vain jangling and strife of words which have reigned for many ages in the Greek Church, and well nigh banished true religion from among them, make these scarce worthy of the Christian name, and lay an insuperable stumbling block before the Mohammedans.

8. Perhaps those of the Romish communion may say, "What wonder that this is the case with heretics, with those who have erred from the Catholic faith, nay, and left the pale of the Church?" But what is the case with them who have not left that church, and who retain the Roman faith still; yea, with the most zealous of all its patrons, the inhabitants of Italy, of Spain, and Portugal? Wherein do they excel the Greek church, except in Italianism, received by tradition from their heathen fathers, and diffused through every city and village? They may, indeed, praise chastity, and rail at women as loudly as their forefather Juvenal; but what is the moral of all this?

Nonne putas melius, quod tecum pusio dormit?

This, it must be acknowledged, is the glory of the Romish church. Herein it does excel the Greek.

They excel it likewise in Deism. Perhaps there is no country in the world, at least in that part of it which bears the Christian name, wherein so large a proportion of the men of education are absolute Deists, if not Atheists, as Italy. And from hence the plague has spread far and wide, through France in particular, so that, did not temporal motives restrain, no small part of the French nobility and gentry would pay no more regard to the Christian revelation than do the mandarins in China.

They excel still more in murder, both private and public. Instances of the former abound all over Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and the frequency of shedding blood has taken away all that horror which otherwise might attend it. Take one instance of a thousand: an English gentleman was, some years ago, at an entertainment in Brescia, when one who was near him whispered a few words in his ear which he did not well understand. He asked his host, "What did that gentleman mean by these words?" and was answered, "That he will murder you; and an Italian is never worse than his word in this. You have no way but to be beforehand with him." This he rejected with abhorrence. But his host, it seems, being not of so tender a conscience,

sent a stranger to him in the morning, who said, "Sir, look out of your window. I have done his business. There he lies. You will please to give me my pay." He pulled out a handful of money, in great disorder, and cried, "There, take what you will." The other replied, "Sir, I am a man of honor, I take only my pay," took a small piece of silver, and retired.

This was a *man of honor* among the Christians of the Romish Church! And many such are to be found all over Italy, whose trade it is to cut throats; to stab for hire, in cool blood. They have *men of conscience*, too. Such were two of the Catholic soldiers, under the famous Duke of Alva, who broke into the house of a poor countryman in Flanders, butchered him and his wife, with five or six children, and, after they had finished their work, sat down to enjoy the fruit of their labor. But in the midst of their meal conscience awaked. One of them started up in great emotion, and cried out, "O Lord! what have I done? As I hope for salvation, I have eaten flesh in Lent!"

The same sort of conscience undoubtedly it was which constrained the late Most Christian King, in defiance of the most solemn treaties, yea, of all ties, divine and human, most graciously to murder so many thousands of his quiet, unresisting subjects; to order his dragoons, wherever they found the Protestants worshipping God, to fall in upon them, sword in hand, without any regard to sex or age. It was conscience, no question, which induced so many of the dukes of Savoy, notwithstanding the public faith engaged over and over, to shed the blood of their loyal subjects, the Vaudois, like water, to ravage their fields, and destroy their cities. What but conscience could move the good Catholics of a neighboring kingdom, in the last century, to murder (according to their own account) two hundred and fifteen thousand Protestants in six months? A costly sacrifice this! What is a hecatomb, a hundred oxen, to two hundred thousand men? And yet what is even this to the whole number of victims who have been offered up in Europe since the beginning of the Reformation; partly by war, partly by the Inquisition, and a thousand other methods of Romish cruelty? No less, within forty years, if the computation of an eminent writer be just, than five-and-forty millions!

Such is the conscience, such the religion, of Romish Christians! Of their Inquisition (the House of Mercy, as it is most unfortunately called) I should give some account, but that it has been largely described by others. Yet it may not be improper to give

a specimen of that mercy which they show to those under their care. At the Act of Faith, so called, which was celebrated some years ago, when Dr. Geddes was in Portugal, a prisoner who had been confined nine years was brought out to execution. Looking up, and seeing, what he had not seen for so long a time, the sun in the midst of heaven, he cried out, "How can any one who sees that glorious creature worship any but the God that made it?" The father who attended immediately ordered a gag to be run through his lip, that he might speak no more.

See the Christians who have received all the advantages of education, all the helps of ancient and modern learning! "Nay, but we have still greater helps than these. We are reformed from the errors of popery; we protest against all those novel corruptions with which the Church of Rome has polluted ancient Christianity. The enormities, therefore, of Popish countries are not to be charged upon us: we are Protestants, and have nothing to do with the vices and villanies of Romish nations."

9. Have we not? Are Protestant nations nothing concerned in those melancholy reflections of Mr. Cowley? "If twenty thousand naked Americans were not able to resist the assaults of but twenty well armed Spaniards, how is it possible for one honest man to defend himself against twenty thousand knaves, who are all furnished *cap-à-pie* with the defensive arms of worldly prudence, and the offensive, too, of craft and malice? He will find no less odds than this against him, if he have much to do in human affairs. Do you wonder, then, that a virtuous man should love to be alone? It is hard for him to be otherwise. He is so when he is among ten thousand. Nor is it so uncomfortable to be alone, without any other creature, as it is to be alone in the midst of wild beasts. Man is to man all kinds of beasts: a fawning dog, a roaring lion, a thieving fox, a robbing wolf, a dissembling crocodile, a treacherous decoy, and a rapacious vulture. The civillest, methinks, of all nations, are those whom we account the most barbarous. There is some moderation and good nature in the Toupinambaltions, who eat no men but their enemies; while we, learned and polite and Christian Europeans, like so many pikes and sharks, prey upon every thing that we can swallow."

Are Protestant nations nothing concerned in that humorous, but terrible picture, drawn by a late eminent hand? "He was perfectly astonished (and who would not, if it were the first time he had heard it?) at the historical account I gave him of our

affairs during the last century; protesting it was only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres—the very worst effects that avarice, faction, hypocrisy, perfidiousness, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition could produce. Even in times of peace, how many innocent and excellent persons have been condemned to death or banishment by great ministers practicing upon the corruption of judges and the malice of factions! How many villains have been exalted to the highest places of trust, power, dignity, and profit! By what methods have great numbers, in all countries, procured titles of honor and vast estates! Perjury, oppression, subornation, fraud, panderism, were some of the most excusable; for many owed their greatness to sodomy or incest; others, to the prostituting of their own wives or daughters; others, to the betraying of their country, or their prince; more, to the perverting of justice to destroy the innocent.” Well might that keen author add, “If a creature pretending to reason can be guilty of such enormities, certainly the corruption of that faculty is far worse than brutality itself.”

Now, are Popish nations only concerned in this? Are the Protestants quite clear? Is there no such thing among them (to take one instance only) as “perverting of justice,” even in public courts of judicature? Can it not be said in any Protestant country, “There is a society of men among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving, according as they are paid, by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black, and black is white? For example: if my neighbor has a mind to my cow, he hires a lawyer to prove that he ought to have my cow from me. I must hire another to defend my right, it being against all rules of law that a man should speak for himself. In pleading, they do not dwell on the merits of the cause, but upon circumstances foreign thereto. For instance: they do not take the shortest method to know what title my adversary has to my cow; but whether the cow be red or black, her horns long or short; whether the field she grazes in be round or square, and the like. After which, they adjourn the cause from time to time; and in ten or twenty years’ time they come to an issue. This society, likewise, has a peculiar cant and jargon of their own, in which all their laws are written. And these they take special care to multiply; whereby they have so confounded truth and falsehood, right and wrong, that it will take twelve years to decide whether the field, left me by my ancestors for six generations, belong to me or to one three hundred miles off.”

Is it in Popish countries only that it can be said, “It does not

appear that any one perfection is required toward the procurement of any one station among you; much less that men are ennobled on account of their virtue; that priests are advanced for their piety or learning, judges for their integrity, senators for the love of their country, or counselors for their wisdom?"

10. But there is a still greater and more undeniable proof that the very foundations of all things, civil and religious, are utterly out of course in the Christian as well as the heathen world. There is a still more horrid reproach to the Christian name, yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity. There is war in the world! war between men! war between Christians! I mean between those that bear the name of Christ, and profess to "walk as he also walked." Now, who can reconcile war, I will not say to religion, but to any degree of reason or common sense?

But is there not a cause? O, yes: "The causes of war," as the same writer observes, "are innumerable. Some of the chief are these: The ambition of princes, or the corruption of their ministers; difference of opinion; as, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh; whether the juice of the grape be blood or wine; what is the best color for a coat, whether black, white, or gray; and whether it should be long or short, whether narrow or wide. Nor are there any wars so furious as those occasioned by such difference of opinions.

"Sometimes two princes make war to decide which of them shall dispossess a third of his dominions. Sometimes a war is commenced because another prince is too strong; sometimes because he is too weak. Sometimes our neighbors want the things which we have, or have the things which we want: so both fight, until they take ours, or we take theirs. It is a reason for invading a country if the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by faction; or to attack our nearest ally if part of his land would make our dominions more round and compact. Another cause for making war is this: a crew are driven by a storm they know not where; at length they make the land, and go ashore; they are entertained with kindness. They give the country a new name, set up a stone or rotten plank for a memorial, murder a dozen of the natives, and bring away a couple by force. Here commences a new right of dominion; ships are sent, and the natives driven out or destroyed. And this is done to civilize and convert a barbarous and idolatrous people."

But, whatever be the cause, let us calmly and impartially consider the thing itself. Here are forty thousand men gathered

together on this plain. What are they going to do? See, there are thirty or forty thousand more at a little distance. And these are going to shoot them through the head or body, to stab them, or split their skulls, and send most of their souls into everlasting fire as fast as possibly they can. Why so? What harm have they done to them? O, none at all! They do not so much as know them. But a man, who is King of France, has a quarrel with another man, who is King of England. So these Frenchmen are to kill as many of these Englishmen as they can, to prove the King of France is in the right. Now, what an argument is this! What a method of proof! What an amazing way of deciding controversies! What must mankind be before such a thing as war could ever be known or thought of upon earth! How shocking, how inconceivable a want must there have been of common understanding, as well as common humanity, before any two governors, or any two nations in the universe, could once think of such a method of decision! If, then, all nations, pagan, Mohammedan, and Christian, do, in fact, make this their last resort, what farther proof do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue? of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind?

In how just and strong a light is this placed by the writer cited before: "I gave him a description of cannons, muskets, pistols, swords, bayonets; of sieges, attacks, mines, countermines, bombardments; of engagements by sea and land; ships sunk with a thousand men, twenty thousand killed on each side, dying groans, limbs flying in the air; smoke, noise, trampling to death under horses' feet, flight, pursuit, victory; fields strewn with carcasses, left for food to dogs and beasts of prey; and, farther, of plundering, stripping, ravishing, burning, and destroying. I assured him I had seen a hundred enemies blown up at once in a siege, and as many in a ship, and beheld the dead bodies drop down in pieces from the clouds, to the great diversion of the spectators."

Is it not astonishing, beyond all expression, that this is the naked truth? that, within a short term of years, this has been the real case in almost every part of even the Christian world? And meanwhile we gravely talk of the "dignity of our nature" in its present state! This is really surprising, and might easily drive even a well-tempered man to say, "One might bear with men, if they would be content with those vices and follies to which nature has entitled them. I am not provoked at the sight

of a pickpocket, a gamester, a politician, a suborner, a traitor, or the like. This is all according to the natural course of things. But when I behold a lump of deformity and diseases, both in body and mind, smitten with pride, it breaks all the measures of my patience; neither shall I ever be able to comprehend how such an animal and such a vice can tally together."

And surely all our declamations on the strength of human reason, and the eminence of our virtues, are no more than the cant and jargon of pride and ignorance, so long as there is such a thing as war in the world. Men in general can never be allowed to be reasonable creatures till they know not war any more. So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, virtue, humanity? They are utterly excluded; they have no place; they are a name, and nothing more. If even a heathen were to give an account of an age wherein reason and virtue reigned, he would allow no war to have place therein. So Ovid of the golden age :

*Nondum præcipites cingebant oppida fossæ;
Non galeæ, non ensis erat. Sine militis usu
Mollia securæ peragebant otia gentes.*

"Steep ditches did not then the town surround,
Nor glittering helm, nor slaughtering sword was found;
Nor arms had they to wield, nor wars to wage,
But peace and safety crown'd the blissful age."

11. How far is the world at present from this state! Yet, when we speak of the folly and wickedness of mankind may we not except our own country—Great Britain and Ireland? In these we have such advantages for improvement, both in knowledge and virtue, as scarce as any other nation enjoys. We are under an excellent constitution, which secures both our religious and civil liberty. We have religion taught in its primitive purity, its genuine native simplicity. And how it prospers among us we may know with great ease and certainty, for we depend not on hearsay, on the report of others, or on subtle and uncertain reasonings, but may see every thing with our own eyes and hear it with our own ears. Well, then, to make all the allowance possible, we will suppose mankind in general to be on a level, with regard to knowledge and virtue, even with the inhabitants of our fortunate islands, and take our measure of them from the present undeniable state of our own countrymen.

In order to take a thorough survey of these let us begin with the lowest and proceed upward. The bulk of the natives of Ireland are to be found in or near their little cabins throughout the

kingdom, most of which are their own workmanship, consisting of four earthen walls, covered with straw or sods, with one opening in the side wall, which serves at once for door, window, and chimney. Here in one room are the cow and pig, the woman with her children, and the master of the family. Now, what knowledge have these rational animals? They know to plant and boil their potatoes, to milk their cow, and to put their clothes on and off, if they have any besides a blanket; but other knowledge they have none, unless in religion. And how much do they know of this? A little more than the Hottentots, and not much. They know the names of God, and Christ, and the Virgin Mary. They know a little of St. Patrick, the pope, and the priest, how to tell their beads, to say *Ave Maria* [Hail Mary] and *Pater Noster* [Our Father], to do what penance they are bid, to hear mass, confess, and pay so much *for the pardon of their sins*. But as to the nature of religion, the life of God in the soul, they know no more (I will not say, than the priest, but) than the beasts of the field.

And how very little above these are the numerous inhabitants of the northern part of Scotland, or of the islands which lie either on the west or on the north side of that kingdom! What knowledge have these, and what religion? Their religion usually lies in a single point: in implicitly believing the head of their clan, and implicitly doing what he bids.* Meantime, they are, one and all, as ignorant of rational, scriptural religion as of algebra, and altogether as far from the practice as from the theory of it.

“But it is not so in England; the very lowest of the people are here better instructed.” I should be right glad to find it so, but I doubt a fair trial will show the contrary. I am afraid we may still say of thousands, myriads of peasants, men, women, and children throughout our nation:

“Wild as the untaught Indian’s brood,
The Christian savages remain;
Strangers, yea, enemies, to God,
They make thee spill thy blood in vain.”

The generality of English peasants are not only grossly, stupidly, I had almost said brutishly, ignorant as to all the arts of this life, but eminently so with regard to religion and the life to come. Ask a countryman, What is faith? What is repentance? What is holiness? What is true religion? and he is no more able to

* By a late act of Parliament there is a happy alteration made in this particular.

give you an intelligible answer than if you were to ask him about the North-east passage. Is there, then, any possibility that they should practice what they know nothing of? If religion is not even in their heads, can it be in their hearts or lives? It cannot. Nor is there the least savor thereof, either in their tempers or conversation. Neither in the one nor the other do they rise one jot above the pitch of a Turk or a heathen.

Perhaps it will be said, "Whatever the clowns in the midland countries are, the people near the sea-coasts are more civilized." Yes; great numbers of them are, and in near all our ports; many thousands there are civilized by smuggling. The numbers concerned herein upon our coasts are far greater than can be imagined. But what reason and what religion have these that trample on all laws, divine and human, by a course of thieving, or receiving stolen goods, of plundering their king and country? I say king and country; seeing whatever is taken from the king is in effect taken from the country, who are obliged to make up all deficiencies in the royal revenue. These are, therefore, general robbers. They rob you and me and every one of their countrymen; seeing, had the king his due customs, a great part of our taxes might be spared. A smuggler, then (and in proportion every seller or buyer of uncustomed goods), is a thief of the first order, a highwayman or pickpocket of the worst sort. Let not any of those prate about reason or religion. It is an amazing instance of human folly that every government in Europe does not drive these vermin away into lands not inhabited.

We are all indebted to those detachments of the army which have cleared some of our coasts of these public nuisances, and, indeed, many of that body have, in several respects, deserved well of their country. Yet can we say of the soldiery in general that they are men of reason and religion? I fear not. Are not the bulk of them void of almost all knowledge, divine and human? And is their virtue more eminent than their knowledge? But I spare them. May God be merciful to them! May he be glorified by their reformation, rather than their destruction!

Is there any more knowledge or virtue in that vast body of men (some hundred thousands), the English sailors? Surely, no. It is not without cause that a ship has been called a "floating hell." What power, what form of religion, is to be found in nine out of ten, shall I say ninety-nine out of a hundred, either of our merchantmen or men-of-war? What do the men in them think or know about religion? What do they practice, either sailors or

marines? I doubt whether any heathen sailors in any country or age, Greek, Roman, or barbarian, ever came up to ours for profound ignorance and barefaced, shameless, shocking impiety. Add to these out of our renowned metropolis the whole brood of porters, draymen, carmen, hackney-coachmen, and, I am sorry to say, noblemen and gentlemen's footmen (together making up some thousands), and you will have such a collection of knowing and pious Christians as all Europe cannot exceed!

"But all men are not like these." No; it is a pity they should. And yet how little better are the retailers of brandy or gin, the inhabitants of blind ale-houses, the oyster women, fish wives, and other good creatures about Billingsgate, and the various clans of peddlars and hawkers that patrol through the streets or ply in Rag-fair and other places of public resort. These, likewise, amount to several thousands, even within the Bills of Mortality. And what knowledge have they? What religion are they of? What morality do they practice?

"But these have had no advantage of education, many of them scarce being able to write or read." Proceed we, then, to those who have had these advantages, the officers of the excise and customs. Are these, in general, men of reason, who think with clearness and connection, and speak pertinently on a given subject? Are they men of religion, sober, temperate, fearing God and working righteousness, having a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man? How many do you find of this kind among them—men that fear an oath; that fear perjury more than death; that would die rather than neglect any part of that duty which they have sworn to perform; that would sooner be torn in pieces than suffer any man, under any pretense, to defraud his majesty of his just right? How many of them will not be deterred from doing their duty either by fear or favor, regard no threatenings in the execution of their office, and accept no bribes, called presents? These only are wise and honest men. Set down all the rest as having neither religion nor sound reason.

"But surely tradesmen have." Some of them have both, and in an eminent degree. Some of our traders are an honor to the nation. But are the bulk of them so? Are a vast majority of our tradesmen, whether in town or country, I will not say religious, but honest men? Who shall judge whether they are or no? Perhaps you think St. Paul is too strict. Let us appeal, then, to Cicero, an honest heathen. Now, when he is laying down rules of honesty between man and man, he proposes two cases:

1. Antisthenes brings a ship-load of corn to Rhodes at a time of great scarcity. The Rhodians flock about him to buy. He knows that five other ships laden with corn will be there to-morrow. Ought he to tell the Rhodians this before he sells his own corn? "Undoubtedly he ought," says the heathen; "otherwise he makes a gain of their ignorance, and so is no better than a thief or a robber."

2. A Roman nobleman comes to a gentleman to buy his house, who tells him, "There is another going to be built near it, which will darken the windows," and, on that account, makes a deduction in the price. Some years after the gentleman buys it of him again. Afterward he sues the nobleman for selling without telling him first that houses were built near, which darkened the windows. The nobleman pleads, "I thought he knew it." The judge asks, "Did you tell him or not?" and on his owning he did not, determines, "This is contrary to the law, *ne quid dolo malo fiat*, Let nothing be done fraudulently," and sentences him immediately to pay back part of the price.

Now, how many of our tradesmen come up to the heathen standard of honesty? Who is clear of *dolus malus* [fraud], such fraud as the Roman judge would immediately have condemned? Which of our countrymen would not have sold his corn or other wares at the highest price he could? Who would have sunk his own market by telling his customers there would be plenty the next day? Perhaps scarce one in twenty. That one the heathen would have allowed to be an honest man; and every one of the rest, according to his sentence, is "no better than a thief or a robber."

I must acknowledge I once believed the body of English merchants to be men of the strictest honesty and honor. But I have lately had more experience. Whoever wrongs the widow and fatherless knows not what honor or honesty means. And how very few are there that will scruple this! I could relate many flagrant instances.

But let one suffice. A merchant dies in the full course of a very extensive business. Another agrees with his widow that, provided she will recommend him to her late husband's correspondents, he will allow her yearly such a proportion of the profits of the trade. She does so; and articles are drawn, which she lodges with an eminent man. This eminent man positively refuses to give them back to her; but gives them to the other merchant, and so leaves her entirely at his mercy. The consequence

is, the other says there is no profit at all, so he does not give her a groat. Now, where is the honesty or honor, either of him who made the agreement, or him who gave back the articles to him?

That there is honor, nay, and honesty, to be found in another body of men, among the gentlemen of the law, I firmly believe, whether attorneys, solicitors, or counselors. But are they not thinly spread? Do the generality of attorneys and solicitors in chancery love their neighbors as themselves, and do to others what (if the circumstances were changed) they would have others do to them? Do the generality of counselors walk by this rule, and by the rules of justice, mercy, and truth? Do they use their utmost endeavors, do they take all the care which the nature of the thing will allow, to be assured that a cause is just and good before they undertake to defend it? Do they never knowingly defend a bad cause, and so make themselves accomplices in wrong and oppression? Do they never deliver the poor into the hand of his oppressor, and see that such as are in necessity have not right? Are they not often the means of withholding bread from the hungry and raiment from the naked, even when it is their own, when they have a clear right thereto by the law of God and man? Is not this effectually done in many cases by protracting the suit from year to year? I have known a friendly bill preferred in chancery by the consent of all parties, the manager assuring them a decree would be procured in two or three months. But although several years are now elapsed they can see no land yet; nor do I know that we are a jot nearer the conclusion than we were the first day. Now, where is the honesty of this? Is it not picking of pockets and no better? A lawyer who does not finish his client's suit as soon as it can be done I cannot allow to have more honesty (though he has more prudence) than if he robbed him on the highway.

"But whether lawyers are or no, sure the nobility and gentry are all men of reason and religion." If you think they are all men of religion, you think very differently from your Master, who made no exception of time or nation when he uttered that weighty sentence, "How difficultly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!" And when some who seem to have been of your judgment were greatly astonished at his saying, instead of retracting or softening, he adds, "Verily I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." You think differently from St. Paul, who declares in those re-

markable words, verified in all ages, "Not many rich men, not many noble, are called," and obey the heavenly calling. So many snares surround them that it is the greatest of all miracles if any of them have any religion at all. And if you think they are all men of sound reason, you do not judge by fact and experience. Much money does not imply much sense, neither does a good estate infer a good understanding. As a gay coat may cover a bad heart, so a fair peruke may adorn a weak head. Nay, a critical judge of human nature avers that this is generally the case. He lays it down as a rule,

Sensus communis in illâ

Fortunâ rarus.

"Common sense is rarely found in men of fortune." "A rich man," says he, "has liberty to be a fool. His fortune will bear him out." *Stultitiam patiuntur opes*, but *tibi parvula res est*, "You have little money, and therefore should have common sense."

I would not willingly say any thing concerning those whom the providence of God has allotted for guides to others. There are many thousands of these in the Established Church, many among dissenters of all denominations. We may add some thousand of Romish priests, scattered through England and swarming in Ireland. Of these, therefore, I would only ask, "Are they all moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them that office and ministry?" If not, they do not "enter by the door into the sheep fold;" they are not sent of God. Is their "eye single?" Is it their sole intention in all their ministrations to glorify God and to save souls? Otherwise "the light which is in them is darkness." And if it be, "how great is that darkness!" Is their "heart right with God?" Are their "affections set on things above, not on things of the earth?" Else, how will they themselves go one step in the way wherein they are to guide others? Once more: "Are they holy in all manner of conversation, as He who hath called them is holy?" If not, with what face can they say to the flock, "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ?"

12. We have now taken a cursory view of the present state of mankind in all parts of the habitable world, and seen in a general way what is their real condition, both with regard to knowledge and virtue. But because this is not so pleasing a picture as human pride is accustomed to draw, and because those who are prepossessed with high notions of their own beauty will not easily

believe that it is taken from the life, I shall endeavor to place it in another view, that it may be certainly known whether it resembles the original. I shall desire every one who is willing to know mankind to begin his inquiry at home. First let him survey himself, and then go on, step by step, among his neighbors.

I ask, then, first, Are you thoroughly pleased with yourself? Say you, Who is not? Nay, I say, Who is? Do you observe nothing in yourself which you dislike, which you cannot cordially approve of? Do you never think too well of yourself; think yourself wiser, better, and stronger than you appear to be upon the proof? Is not this pride? And do you approve of pride? Were you never angry without a cause, or farther than that cause required? Are you not apt to be so? Do you approve of this? Do you not frequently resolve against it, and do not you break those resolutions again and again? Can you help breaking them? If so, why do you not? Are not you prone to "unreasonable desires," either of pleasure, praise, or money? Do not you catch yourself desiring things not worth a desire, and other things more than they deserve? Are all your desires proportioned to the real, intrinsic value of things? Do you not know and feel the contrary? Are not you continually liable to "foolish and hurtful desires?" And do not you frequently relapse into them, knowing them to be such; knowing that they have before "pierced you through with many sorrows?" Have you not often resolved against these desires, and as often broke your resolutions? Can you help breaking them? Do so; help it if you can; and if not, own your helplessness.

Are you thoroughly pleased with your own life? *Nihilne vides quod nolis?* "Do you observe nothing there which you dislike?" I presume you are not too severe a judge here; nevertheless, I ask, Are you quite satisfied, from day to day, with all you say or do? Do you *say* nothing which you afterward wish you had not said, *do* nothing which you wish you had not done? Do you never speak any thing contrary to truth or love? Is that right? Let your own conscience determine. Do you never do any thing contrary to justice or mercy? Is that well done? You know it is not. Why, then, do you not amend? *Moves, sed nil promoves.* You resolve and resolve, and do just as you did before.

Your *wife*, however, is wiser and better than you. Nay, perhaps you do not think so. Possibly you said once,

"Thou hast no faults, or I no faults can spy;
Thou art all beauty, or all blindness I,"

but you do not say so now. She is not without faults, and you can see them plain enough. You see more faults than you desire, both in her temper and behavior; and yet you cannot mend them, and she either cannot or will not. And she says the very same of you. Do your parents or hers live with you? And do not they, too, exercise your patience? Is there nothing in their temper or behavior that gives you pain, nothing which you wish to have altered? Are you a parent yourself? Parents in general are not apt to think too meanly of their own dear offspring. And, probably, at some times you admire yours more than enough; you think there are none such. But do you think so upon cool reflection? Is the behavior of all your children, of most, of any of them, just such as you would desire, toward yourself, toward each other, and toward all men? Are their tempers just such as you would wish—loving, modest, mild, and teachable? Do you observe no self-will, no passion, no stubbornness, no ill nature, or surliness among them? Did you not observe more or less of these in every one of them before they were two years old? And have not those seeds ever since grown up with them, till they have brought forth a plentiful harvest?

Your servants or apprentices are probably older than your children. And are they wiser and better? Of all those who have succeeded each other for twenty years, how many were good servants? How many of them did their work “unto the Lord, not as pleasing man, but God?” How many did the same work, and in as exact a manner, behind your back as before your face? They that did not were knaves; they had no religion, they had no morality. Which of them studied your interest in all things, just as if it had been his own? I am afraid, as long as you have lived in the world, you have seen few of these black swans yet.

Have you had better success with the journeymen and laborers whom you occasionally employ? Will they do the same work if you are at a distance which they do while you are standing by? Can you depend upon their using you as they would you should use them? And will they do this, not so much for gain as for conscience’ sake? Can you trust them as to the price of their labor? Will they never charge more than it is fairly worth? If you have found a set of such workmen, pray do not conceal so valuable a treasure, but immediately advertise the men and their places of abode for the common benefit of your countrymen.

Happy you who have such as these about your house! And are your neighbors as honest and loving as they? They who live

either in the same, or in the next house; do these love you as themselves, and do to you in every point as they would have you do to them? Are they guilty of no untrue or unkind sayings, no unfriendly actions toward you? And are they (as far as you see or know), in all other respects, reasonable and religious men? How many of your neighbors answer this character? Would it require a large house to contain them?

But you have intercourse, not with the next neighbors only, but with several tradesmen; and all very honest, are they not? You may easily make a trial. Send a child or a countryman to one of their shops. If the shopkeeper is an honest man he will take no advantage of the buyer's ignorance. If he does, he is no honestest than a thief. And how many tradesmen do you know who would scruple it?

Go a little farther. Send to the market for what you want. "What is the lowest price of this?" "Five shillings, sir." "Can you take no less?" "No; upon my word. It is worth it, every penny." An hour after he sells it for a shilling less. And it is really worth no more. Yet is not this the course (a few persons excepted) in every market throughout the kingdom? Is it not generally, though not always, "Cheat that cheat can; sell as dear as you can, and buy as cheap." And what are they who steer by this rule better than a company of *Newgate birds*? Shake them all together; for there is not a grain of honesty among them.

But are not your own tenants, at least, or your landlord, honest men? You are persuaded they are. Very good; remember, then, an honest man's word is as good as his bond. You are preparing a receipt, or writing, for a sum of money, which you are going to pay or lend to this honest man. *Writing!* what need of that? You do not fear he should die soon. You did not once think of it. But you do not care to trust him without it; that is, you are not sure but he is a mere knave. What, your landlord, who is a justice of peace; it may be a judge; nay, a member of Parliament; possibly a peer of the realm! And cannot you trust this honorable, if not right honorable man, without a paltry receipt? I do not ask whether he is a whoremonger, an adulterer, a blasphemer, a proud, a passionate, a revengeful man; this, it may be, his nearest friends will allow; but do you suspect his honesty, too?

13. Such is the state of the Protestant Christians in England. Such their virtue, from the least to the greatest, if you take an impartial survey of your parents, children, servants, laborers, neigh-

bors; of tradesmen, gentry, nobility. What, then, can we expect from Papists? What from Jews, Mohammedans, heathens?

And it may be remarked that this is the plain, glaring, apparent condition of human kind. It strikes the eye of the most careless, inaccurate observer, who does not trouble himself with any more than their outside. Now, it is certain, the generality of men do not wear their worst side outward. Rather, they study to appear better than they are, and to conceal what they can of their faults. What a figure, then, would they make were we able to touch them with Ithuriel's spear! What a prospect would there be could we anticipate the transactions of the great day! could we "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the thoughts and intents of the heart!"

This is the plain, naked fact, without any extenuation on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other. The present state of the moral world is as conspicuous as that of the natural. Ovid said no more concerning both, near two thousand years since, than is evidently true at this day. Of the natural world he says, (whether this took place at the fall of man, or about the time of the deluge):

*Jupiter antiqui contraxit tempora veris,
Perque hyemes, æstusque, et inæquales autumnos,
Et breve ver, spatiis exegit quatuor annum.*

"The God of nature, and her sovereign King,
Shorten'd the primitive perennial spring;
The spring gave place, no sooner come than past,
To summer's heat, and winter's chilling blast,
And autumn sick, irregular and uneven;
While the sad year, through different seasons driven,
Obey'd the stern decree of angry Heaven."

And a man may as modestly deny that spring and summer, autumn and winter, succeed each other, as deny one article of the ensuing account of the moral world:

*Irrupit venæ peioris in ævum
Omne nefas: Fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque;
In quorum subiere locum, fraudesque, dolique,
Insidiæque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi.*

"A flood of general wickedness broke in
At once, and made the iron age begin:
Virtue and truth forsook the faithless race,
And fraud and wrong succeeded in their place.
Deceit and violence, the dire thirst of gold,
Lust to possess, and rage to have and hold."

What country is there now upon earth, in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America, be the inhabitants pagans, Turks, or Christians, concerning which we may not say?

*Vivitur ex rapto : Non hospes ab hospite tutus :
Filius ante diem patrios inquit in annos ;
Victa jacet pietas ; et Virgo cæde madentes
Ultima cælestum terras Astræa reliquit.*

“They live by rapine. The unwary guest
Is poison’d at the inhospitable feast.
The son, impatient for his father’s death,
Numbers his years, and longs to stop his breath :
Extinguish’d all regard for God and man ;
And Justice, last of the celestial train,

Spurns the earth drench’d in blood, and flies to heaven again.”

14. Universal misery is at once a consequence and a proof of this universal corruption. Men are unhappy (how very few are the exceptions!) because they are unholy. *Culpam pœna premit comes*: “Pain accompanies and follows sin.” Why is the earth so full of complicated distress? Because it is full of complicated wickedness. Why are not you happy? Other circumstances may occur, but the main reason is because you are not holy. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that wickedness can consist with happiness. A Roman heathen tells the English heathens, *Nemo malus felix*: “No vicious man is happy.” And if you are not guilty of any gross outward vice, yet you have vicious tempers, and as long as these have power in your heart true peace has no place. You are proud; you think too highly of yourself. You are passionate, often angry without reason. You are self-willed; you would have your own will, your own way in every thing—that is, plainly, you would rule over God and man; you would be the governor of the world. You are daily liable to unreasonable desires; some things you desire that are no way desirable, others which ought to be avoided, yea, abhorred, at least as they are now circumstanced. And can a proud or a passionate man be happy? O, no! experience shows it is impossible. Can a man be happy who is full of self-will? Not unless he can dethrone the Most High. Can a man of unreasonable desires be happy? Nay, they “pierce” him “through with many sorrows.”

I have not touched upon envy, malice, revenge, covetousness, and other gross vices. Concerning these it is universally agreed by all thinking men, Christian or heathen, that a man can no more be happy while they lodge in his bosom than if a vulture was gnawing his liver. It is supposed, indeed, that a very small part

of mankind, only the vilest of men, are liable to these. I know not that, but certainly this is not the case with regard to pride, anger, self-will, foolish desires. Those who are not accounted bad men are by no means free from these. And this alone (were they liable to no other pain) would prevent the generality of men, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, from ever knowing what happiness means.

15. You think, however, you could bear yourself pretty well, but you have such a husband or wife, such parents and children, as are intolerable! One has such a tongue, the other so perverse a temper! The language of these, the carriage of those, is so provoking; otherwise you should be happy enough. True; if both you and they were wise and virtuous. Meanwhile neither the vices of your family nor your own will suffer you to rest.

Look out of your own doors: "Is there any evil in the city, and" sin "hath not done it?" Is there any misfortune or misery to be named, whereof it is not either the direct or remote occasion? Why is it that the friend or relation for whom you are so tenderly concerned is involved in so many troubles? Have not you done your part toward making them happy? Yes; but they will not do their own: one has no management, no frugality, or no industry; another is too fond of pleasure. If he is not what is called scandalously vicious, he loves wine, women, or gaming. And to what does this all amount? He might be happy, but sin will not suffer it.

Perhaps you will say, "Nay, he is not at fault; he is both frugal and diligent; but he has fallen into the hands of those who have imposed upon his good nature." Very well; but still sin is the cause of his misfortunes; only it is another's, not his own.

If you inquire into the troubles under which your neighbor, your acquaintance, or one you casually talk with, labors, still you will find the far greater part of them arise from some fault either of the sufferer or of others, so that still sin is at the root of trouble and it is unholiness which causes unhappiness.

And this holds as well with regard to families as with regard to individuals. Many families are miserable through want. They have not the conveniences, if the necessities of life. Why have they not? Because they will not work: were they diligent they would want nothing. Or, if not idle, they are wasteful; they squander away in a short time what might have served for many years. Others, indeed, are diligent and frugal, too; but a treacherous friend or a malicious enemy has ruined them, or they groan

under the hand of the oppressor, or the extortioner has entered into their labors. You see, then, in all these cases, want (though in various ways) is the effect of sin. But is there no rich man near? none that could relieve these innocent sufferers without impairing his own fortune? Yes; but he thinks of nothing less. They may rot and perish for him. See, more sin is implied in their suffering.

But is not the family of that rich man himself happy? No; far from it, perhaps farther than his poor neighbors. For they are not content, their "eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor" their "ear with hearing." Endeavoring to fill their souls with the pleasures of sense and imagination, they are only pouring water into a sieve. Is not this the case with the wealthiest families you know? But it is not the whole case with some of them. There is a debauched, a jealous, or an ill-natured husband; a gaming, passionate, or imperious wife; an undutiful son, or an imprudent daughter, who banishes happiness from the house. And what is all this but sin in various shapes, with its sure attendant, misery?

In a town, a corporation, a city, a kingdom, is it not the same thing still? From whence comes that complication of all the miseries incident to human nature, war? Is it not from the tempers "which war in the soul?" When nation rises up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, does it not necessarily imply pride, ambition, coveting what is another's; or envy, or malice, or revenge on one side, if not on both? Still, then, sin is the baleful source of affliction, and consequently the flood of miseries which covers the face of the earth—which overwhelms not only single persons, but whole families, towns, cities, kingdoms—is a demonstrative proof of the overflowing of ungodliness in every nation under heaven.

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT OF DEPRAVITY.

(Written in reply to Dr. John Taylor's treatise on "Original Sin," in 1757.)

I. 1. THE fact, then, being undeniable, I would ask, How is it to be accounted for? Will you resolve it into the prevalence of custom, and say, "Men are guided more by example than reason?" It is true: they run after one another like a flock of sheep (as Seneca remarked long ago), *Non qua eundum est, sed qua itur*: "Not where they ought to go, but where others go." But I gain no ground by this; I am equally at a loss to account for this cus-

tom. How is it (seeing men are reasonable creatures, and nothing is so agreeable to reason as virtue) that the custom of all ages and nations is not on the side of virtue rather than vice? If you say, "This is owing to bad education, which propagates ill customs," I own education has an amazing force far beyond what is commonly imagined. I own, too, that as bad education is found among Christians as ever obtained among the heathens. But I am no nearer still; I am not advanced a hair's breadth toward the conclusion. For how am I to account for the almost universal prevalence of this bad education? I want to know when this prevailed first, and how it came to prevail. How came wise and good men (for such they must have been before bad education commenced) not to train up their children in wisdom and goodness, in the way wherein they had been brought up themselves! They had then no ill precedent before them; how came they to make such a precedent? And how came all the wisdom of after ages never to correct that precedent? You must suppose it to have been of ancient date. Profane history gives us a large account of universal wickedness, that is, universal bad education, for above two thousand years last past. Sacred history adds the account of above two thousand more; in the very beginning of which (more than four thousand years ago) "all flesh had corrupted their ways before the Lord!" or, to speak agreeably to this hypothesis, were very corruptly educated. Now, how is this to be accounted for, that, in so long a tract of time, no one nation under the sun has been able, by wholesome laws, or by any other method, to remove this grievous evil, so that, their children being well educated, the scale might at length turn on the side of reason and virtue?

These are questions which I conceive will not easily be answered to the satisfaction of any impartial inquirer. But to bring the matter to a short issue: the first parents who educated their children in vice and folly either were wise and virtuous themselves or were not. If they were not their vice did not proceed from education; so the supposition falls to the ground: wickedness was antecedent to bad education. If they were wise and virtuous, it cannot be supposed but they would teach their children to tread in the same steps. In no wise, therefore, can we account for the present state of mankind from example or education.

2. Let us, then, have recourse to the oracles of God. How do they teach us to account for this fact, that "all flesh corrupted their way before God," even in the antediluvian world; that mankind was little, if at all, less corrupt from the flood to the giving

of the law by Moses; that from that time till Christ came even God's chosen people were a "faithless and stubborn generation," little better, though certainly not worse, than the heathens who knew not God; that when Christ came both "Jews and Gentiles" were "all under sin, all the world was guilty before God;" that, even after the Gospel had been preached in all nations, still the wise and virtuous were a "little flock," bearing so small a proportion to the bulk of mankind that it might yet be said, "The whole world lieth in wickedness; that from that time "the mystery of iniquity" wrought even in the Church, till the Christians were little better than the heathens; and, lastly, that at this day "the whole world," whether pagan, Mohammedan, or nominally Christian (little, indeed, is the flock which is to be excepted), again "lieth in wickedness," doth not "know the only true God," doth not love, doth not worship him as God; hath not "the mind which was in Christ," neither "walketh as he walked;" doth not practice justice, mercy, and truth, nor do to others as they would others should do to them;—how, I say, do the oracles of God teach us to account for this plain fact?

3. They teach us that "in Adam all die" (1 Cor. xv, 22, compared with Gen. ii and iii); that "by" the first "man came" both natural and spiritual "death;" that "by" this "one man sin entered into the world, and death" in consequence of sin; and that from him "death passed upon all men, in that all have sinned" (Rom. v, 12).

But you aver that "no evil but temporal death came upon men in consequence of Adam's sin."* And this you endeavor to prove by considering the chief Scriptures which are supposed to relate thereto.

The first you mention is Gen. ii, 17: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

On this you observe: "Death was to be the consequence of his disobedience. And the death here threatened can be opposed only to that life God gave Adam when he created him." True; but how are you assured that God, when he created him, did not give him spiritual as well as animal life? Now, spiritual death is opposed to spiritual life. And this is more than the death of the body.

"But this is pure conjecture without a solid foundation, for no

* Dr. Taylor's *Doctrine of Original Sin*, Part 1, to whom I address myself in what follows. What is quoted from him, generally in his own words, is inclosed in commas.

other life is spoken of before." Yes; there is: "the image of God" is spoken of before. This is not, therefore, pure conjecture, but is grounded upon a solid foundation, upon the plain word of God.

Allowing, then, that "Adam could understand it of no other life than that which he had newly received," yet would he naturally understand it of the life of God in his soul, as well as of the life of his body.

"In this light, therefore, the sense of the threatening will stand thus: 'Thou shalt surely die;' as if he had said, I have 'formed thee of the dust of the ground, and breathed into thy nostrils the breath of lives;' both of animal life and of spiritual life; and in both respects thou "art become a living soul." "But if thou eatest of the forbidden tree, thou shalt cease to be a living soul. For I will take from thee" the lives I have given, and thou shalt die spiritually, temporally, eternally.

But "here is not one word relating to Adam's posterity. Though it be true, if he had died immediately upon his transgression all his posterity must have been extinct with him." It is true; yet "not one word" of it is expressed. Therefore, other consequences of his sin may be equally implied, though they are no more expressed than this.

4. The second scripture you cite is Gen. iii, from verse 7 to 24.

On this you observe: Here "we have some consequences of our first parents' sin before God judged them, some appointed by his judicial sentence, and some which happened after that sentence was pronounced."

"Immediately upon their transgression they were seized with shame and fear. Guilt will always be attended with shame. And a state of guilt is often in Scripture expressed by being naked. Moses 'saw that the people were naked; for Aaron had made them naked to their shame among their enemies' (Exod. xxxii, 25)." Certainly, naked does not mean guilty here; but either stripped of their ornaments (xxiii, 5, 6), or of their swords, or their upper garment. "Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen" (Isa. xlvi, 3). Here also nakedness does not mean guilt; but is to be taken literally, as manifestly appears from the words immediately preceding: "Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers" (verse 2). And, "blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. xvi, 15). The plain meaning is, lest he lose the graces he hath received, and so be ashamed before men and angels.

"Their fear is described: 'Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden' (Gen. iii, 8). They had no such fear while they were innocent; but now they were afraid to stand before their judge."

This is all you can discern in the Mosaic account as the consequence of our first parents' sin before God judged them. Mr. Hervey discerns something more. I make no apology for transcribing some of his words:

"Adam violated the precept, and, as the nervous original expresses it, 'died the death.' He before possessed a life incomparably more excellent than that which the beasts enjoy. He possessed a divine life, consisting, according to the apostle, 'in knowledge, in righteousness, and true holiness.' This, which was the distinguishing glory of his nature, in the day that he ate the forbidden fruit was extinct.

"His understanding, originally enlightened with wisdom, was clouded with ignorance. His heart, once warmed with heavenly love, became alienated from God his maker. His passions and appetites, rational and regular before, shook off the government of order and reason. In a word, the whole moral frame was unhinged, disjointed, broken.

"The ignorance of fallen Adam was palpable. Witness that absurd attempt to hide himself from the eye of Omniscience among the trees of the garden. His aversion to the all-gracious God was equally plain; otherwise, he would never have fled from his Maker, but rather have hastened on the wings of desire into the place of the divine manifestation.

"A strange variety of disorderly passions were evidently predominant in his breast. Pride; for he refuses to acknowledge his guilt, though he cannot but own the fact. Ingratitude; for he obliquely upbraids the Creator with his gift, as though it had been a snare rather than a blessing: 'The woman thou gavest me.' The female criminal acts the same unhumiliated part. She neither takes shame to herself, nor gives glory to God, nor puts up a single petition for pardon.

"As all these disasters ensued upon the breach of the commandment, they furnish us with the best key to open the meaning of the penalty annexed. They prove beyond any argument that spiritual death and all its consequences were comprised in the extent of the threatening." (*Theron and Aspasio*, Dial. II.)

5. However, you say, "No other could in justice be punishable for that transgression which was their own act and deed only." If no other was justly punishable, then no other was punished for that transgression. But all were punished for that transgression, namely, with death. Therefore, all men were justly punishable for it. By punishment I mean suffering consequent upon sin, or pain inflicted because of sin preceding. Now, it is plain all mankind suffer death, and that this suffering is consequent upon Adam's sin. Yea, and that this pain is inflicted on *all men* because of his sin. When, therefore, you say, "Death does descend to us in consequence of his transgression," you allow the point we contend for, and are very welcome to add, "Yet it is not a punishment for his sin." You allow the thing. Call it by what name you please.

But you say, "Punishment always connotes guilt." It always connotes sin and suffering, and here are both. Adam sinned, his posterity suffer, and that in consequence of his sin.

But you think, "sufferings are benefits to us." Doubtless; but this does not hinder their being punishments. The pain I suffer as a punishment for my own sins may be a benefit to me, but it is a punishment nevertheless.

But "as they two only were guilty of the first sin, so no other but they two only could be conscious of it as their sin." No other could be conscious of it as their sin in the same sense as Adam and Eve were; and yet others may "charge it upon themselves" in a different sense, so as to judge themselves "children of wrath" on that account.

To sum up this point in Dr. Jennings's words: "If there be any thing in this argument, that Adam's posterity could not be justly punishable for his transgressions, because it was his personal act and not theirs, it must prove universally that it is unjust to punish the posterity of any man for his personal crimes. And yet most certain it is that God has in other cases actually punished men's sins on their posterity. Thus the posterity of Canaan, the son of Ham, is punished with slavery for his sin (Gen. ix, 25, 27). Noah pronounced the curse under a divine afflatus, and God confirmed it by his providence. So we do, in fact, suffer for Adam's sin, and that, too, by the sentence inflicted on our first parents. We suffer death in consequence of their transgression. Therefore, we are, in some sense, guilty of their sin. I would ask, What is guilt but an obligation to suffer punishment for sin? Now, since we suffer the same penal evil which God threatened to, and inflicted on, Adam for his sin, and since it is allowed we suffer this for Adam's sin, and that by the sentence of God, appointing all men to die because Adam sinned, is not the consequence evident? Therefore we are all some way guilty of Adam's sin." (*Jennings's Vindication.*)

6. "The consequences appointed by the judicial sentence of God are found in that pronounced on the serpent, or the woman, or the man."

"The serpent is cursed (Gen. iii, 14, 15). And those words in the fifteenth verse: 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he' (so the Hebrew) 'shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,' imply that God would appoint his only begotten Son to maintain a kingdom in the world opposite to the kingdom of Satan, till he should be born of a woman, and, by his doctrine, example, obedience, and death, give the last stroke, by way of moral means, to the power and works of the devil."

I do not understand that expression, "By way of moral means." What I understand from the whole tenor of Scripture is, that the eternal, almighty Son of God, "who is over all, God blessed forever," having reconciled us to God by his blood, creates us anew by his Spirit, and reigns till he hath destroyed all the works of the devil.

"Sentence is passed upon the woman (verse 16), that she should

bring forth children with more pain and hazard than otherwise she would have done." How? With "more pain and hazard" than otherwise she would have done! Would she otherwise have had any pain at all? or have brought forth children with any hazard? Hazard of what? Certainly not of death. I cannot comprehend this.

"Lastly, the sentence upon man (verses 17-19) first affects the earth, and then denounces death upon himself.

"After sentence pronounced, God, having clothed Adam and Eve, drove them out of Paradise."

Here, "observe (1), A curse is pronounced on the serpent and on the ground, but no curse upon the woman and the man." But a curse fell upon them in that very moment wherein they transgressed the law of God. For, "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are" contained "in the law to do them." Vainly, therefore, do you subjoin, "Though they are subjected to sorrow, labor, and death, these are not inflicted under the notion of a curse." Surely they are; as the several branches of that curse which he had already incurred; and which had already not only "darkened and weakened his rational powers," but disordered his whole soul.

"Observe (2), Here is not one word of any other death, but the dissolution of the body." Nor was it needful. He felt in himself that spiritual death which is the prelude of death everlasting. "But the words, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' restrain this death to this dissolution alone." "This dissolution alone" is *expressed* in those words. But how does it appear that nothing more is *implied*? The direct contrary appears from your own assertions; for if these words refer clearly to those, "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," and if "the judicial act of condemnation clearly implieth the depriving him of that life which God then breathed into him," it undeniably follows that this judicial act implieth a deprivation of spiritual life as well as temporal, seeing God breathed into him both one and the other, in order to his becoming "a living soul."

It remains that the death expressed in the original threatening, and implied in the sentence pronounced upon man, includes all evils which could befall his soul and body, death temporal, spiritual, and eternæ.

THE TRANSMISSION OF SIN.

(Reply to Dr. Taylor, continued, 1757.)

BEFORE I say any thing on this head I must premise that there are a thousand circumstances relating to it, concerning which I can form no conception at all, but am utterly in the dark. I know not how my body was fashioned in the womb, or when or how my soul was united to it; and it is far easier, in speaking on so abstruse a subject, to pull down than to build up. I can easily object to any hypothesis which is advanced; but I cannot easily defend any.

And if you ask me how, in what determinate manner, sin is propagated, how it is transmitted from father to son, I answer plainly, I cannot tell; no more than I can tell how man is propagated, how a body is transmitted from father to son. I know both the one and the other fact, but I can account for neither.

Thus much, however, is plain, that "God is the maker of every man who comes into the world." For it is God alone who gives man power to propagate his species. Or, rather, it is God himself who does the work by man as an instrument—man (as you observed before) having no other part in producing man than the oak has in producing an acorn. God is really the producer of every man, every animal, every vegetable in the world, as he is the true *primum mobile* [first mover], the spring of all motion throughout the universe. So far we agree. But when you subsume, "If it be the power of God whereby a sinful species is propagated, whereby a sinful father begets a sinful son, then God is the author of sin; that sinfulness is chargeable upon him." Here we divide. I cannot allow the consequence; because the same argument would make God chargeable with all the sinful actions of men. For it is the power of God whereby the murderer lifts up his arm, whereby the adulterer perpetrates his wickedness, full as much as it is his power whereby an acorn produces an oak, or a father a son. But does it follow that God is chargeable with the sin? You know it does not follow. The power of God, vulgarly termed *nature*, acts from age to age under its fixed rules. Yet he who this moment supplies the power by which a sinful action is committed is not chargeable with the sinfulness of that action. In like manner it is the power of God which, from age to age, continues the human species. Yet he who this moment supplies the power whereby a

single nature is propagated (according to the fixed rules established in the lower world) is not chargeable with the sinfulness of that nature. This distinction you must allow, as was observed before, or charge God with all the sin committed under heaven. And this general answer may suffice any sincere and modest inquirer, without entangling himself in those minute particulars which are beyond the reach of human understanding.

“But does not God create the nature of every man that comes into the world?” He does not, in the proper sense of the word, create. The Scripture plainly affirms the contrary: “On the seventh day he rested from all his work which God created and made” (Gen. ii, 2, 3). “The works” which God created “were finished from the foundation of the world.” And as soon as they were finished “God ceased from his work” (Heb. iv, 3, 10)—namely, from his work of creating. He, therefore, now (not creates, but) produces the body of every man in the same manner as he produces the oak, only by supplying the power whereby one creature begets another, according to what we term *the laws of nature*. In a higher sense he is the creator of all souls. But how or when he does or did create them, I cannot tell; neither can I give any account how or when he unites them to the body. Likewise, how we are conceived in sin, I know not; but I know that we are so conceived. God hath said it; and I know he will be “justified in his saying, and clear when he is judged.”

It is certain that God is the Maker of every man; but it is neither certain nor true, as you say, that he “makes every man in the womb, both soul and body, as immediately as he made Adam,” and that, therefore, “every man comes out of the hands of God as properly as Adam did.” To interpret any Scriptures as affirming this is to make them flatly contradict other Scriptures. God made Adam by immediate creation; he does not so make every man, nor any man beside him. Adam came directly out of the hands of God without the intervention of any creature. Does every man thus come out of the hands of God? Do no creatures now intervene?

“But if God produces the nature of every man in the womb, he must produce it with all the qualities which belong to that nature, as it is then and so produced.” So, if God produces the action of every man in the world, he must produce it with all the qualities which belong to that action, as it is then and so produced. “For it is impossible God should produce our nature

and not produce the qualities it has when produced." For it is impossible God should produce an action, and yet not produce the qualities it has when produced. "No substance can be made without some qualities, and it must necessarily, as soon as it is made, have those qualities which the Maker gives it, and no other." No action can be produced without some qualities, and it must necessarily, as soon as it is produced, have those qualities which the producer gives it, and no other. You see what this argument would prove, if it proved any thing at all.

We will trace it a little farther: "If God produces the nature of every man in the womb, with all its qualities, then, whatever those qualities are, they are the will and the work of God." So if God produces the action of every man in the world, with all its qualities, then, whatever those qualities are, they are the will and the work of God. Surely, no. God does (in the sense above explained) produce the action which is sinful; and yet (whether I can account for it or no) the sinfulness of it is not his will or work. He does also produce the nature which is sinful (he supplies the power by which it is produced); and yet (whether I can account for this or no) the sinfulness of it is not his will or work. I am as sure of this as I am that there is a God; and yet impenetrable darkness rests on the subject. Yet I am conscious my understanding can no more fathom this deep than reconcile man's free will with the foreknowledge of God.

"Consequently, those qualities cannot be sinful." This consequence cannot hold in one case, unless it holds in both; but if it does, there can be no sin in the universe.

However, you go on: "It is highly dishonorable to God to suppose he is displeased at us for what he himself has infused into our nature." It is not allowed that he has "infused sin into our nature," no more than that he infuses sin into our actions, though it is his power which produces both our actions and nature.

I am aware of the distinction that man's free will is concerned in the one case but not the other, and that on this account God cannot be charged with the sinfulness of human actions; but this does by no means remove the difficulty. For, 1. Does not God know what the murderer or adulterer is about to do? what use he will make of that power to act which he cannot have but from God? 2. Does he not at the instant supply him with that power whereby the sinful action is done? God, therefore, produces the action which is sinful. It is his work and his will (for

he works nothing but what he wills), and yet the sinfulness of the action is neither his work nor will.

"But can those passions or propensities be sinful which are neither caused nor consented to by me?" I answer, spite, envy, and those other passions and tempers which are manifestly discernible, even in little children, are certainly not virtuous, not morally good, whether you term them sinful or not; and it is as certain these exist before they are consented to, much less caused, by those that feel them. "But sin, if it is unavoidable, is no sin." Whether you term it sin or not, it is contrary to the nature of God, and a transgression of his holy and good law.

"But a natural moral evil is a contradiction, for if it be natural it cannot be moral." That tempers contrary to the nature and the law of God are natural is a point of daily experience, but if you do not choose to call these morally evil, call them what you please. All I aver is that such tempers do exist in us antecedent to our choice.

"But if the actual sins of men proceed from a corrupt nature they are unavoidable, and consequently no sins at all." Actual sins may proceed from a corrupt nature and yet not be unavoidable; but if actions contrary to the nature of God were unavoidable it would not follow that they were innocent.

To the question, "How comes it to pass that our passions and appetites are now so irregular and strong that not one person has resisted them so as to keep himself pure and innocent?" you answer by another question, "How came Adam not to keep himself pure and innocent?" There is no parity between the one case and the other. I can account for any one man's committing sin, supposing him to be naturally upright, as easily as for Adam's committing it. Any one person, as well as Adam, though naturally inclined to neither, might choose either good or evil; and on this supposition he would be as likely to choose one as the other. But the case is extremely different if you place Adam on one side and all mankind on the other. It is true, "the nature of sin is not altered by its being general." But the case is very widely altered. On this or that man it may "come just as it came upon Adam, by his own choice and compliance with temptation." But how comes it that all men under the sun should choose evil rather than good? How came all the children of Adam, from the beginning of the world till now, to comply with temptation? How is it that, in all ages, the scale has turned the wrong way with regard to every man born into

the world? Can you see no difficulty in this? And can you find any way to solve that difficulty, but to say with the psalmist, we were “shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mothers conceive” us?

OF ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

(*Reply to Dr. Taylor, continued, 1757.*)

“ORIGINAL righteousness is said to be ‘that moral rectitude in which Adam was created. His reason was clear, and sense, appetite, and passion were subject to it. His judgment was uncorrupted, and his will had a constant propensity to holiness. He had a supreme love to his Creator, a fear of offending him, and a readiness to do his will.’ When Adam sinned he lost this moral rectitude, this image of God in which he was created; in consequence of which all his posterity come into the world destitute of that image.”—*Dr. Taylor.*

IN order to remove this mistake, you reconsider some of the texts on which it is grounded. “Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. iii, 9, 10). “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. iv, 22–24.)

On this, you affirm, “‘The old’ and ‘new man,’ here, do not signify a course of life, but the ‘old man’ signifies the heathen, the ‘new man’ the Christian profession.”

This you prove, 1. From Eph. ii, 15: “Christ abolished the enmity, to make (or create) in himself of twain one new man.” Does this only mean one new profession? It evidently means one Church, both of Jews and Gentiles.

You prove it, 2. From Col. iii, 8–12, where “the apostle tells the Colossian Christians that ‘now’ they were obliged to ‘put off anger,’ and ‘to put on bowels of mercies;’ to admit the Christian spirit into their hearts, and to practise Christian duties; for this reason, because they ‘had put off the old man,’ and ‘had put on the new.’ This shows ‘the new man’ was something they might have ‘put on,’ and yet be defective in personal internal holiness.” True; defective so far as still to want more—more “bowels of mercies, meekness, long-suffering.” But this does not show that the “new man” does not mean the principle both of internal and external holiness. The consciousness of having

received this is a strong motive both to depart from evil and to labor after a continual increase of every holy and heavenly temper; therefore, here likewise, "the putting off the old and the putting on the new man" does not mean an outward profession, but a real, inward change, a renewal of soul "in righteousness and true holiness."

You prove it, 3. From Eph. iv, 22, 24: "Here," you say, "he considers 'the putting off the old' and 'putting on the new man' as a duty. They had done it by profession, and therefore were obliged to do it effectually." They had done it effectually. So the whole tenor of the apostle's words implies: "Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be," rather seeing that, "ye have been taught by him, that ye put off the old man, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv, 20-24). The apostle here manifestly speaks, not of a lesson they had not learned, but of one which God had taught them already; and thence exhorts them to walk worthy of the blessing they had received, to be "holy in all manner of conversation."

But you say, 4. "'The putting on the new man' is one thing, and 'the creating him' is another. He must first be created, and then put on." No; he is created and put on at the same time; the former word more directly referring to God, who creates, the latter to man, who is created. "But God," you say, "'created the new man,' when he erected the gospel dispensation, as appears from Eph. ii, 15, 19-22." I answer: (1) If those latter verses are explanatory of that expression, "one new man," in the fifteenth, then it does not mean one outward profession, but the one Church of living believers in Christ. (2) The expression in the fifteenth verse is not the same with that we are now considering. Neither is the meaning of that and this expression the same: "One new man means one Church, and nothing else;" "the new man" means quite another thing, the work of God in every individual believer.

You say, 5. "'The old man and the new,' and the 'new man's being renewed and created,' and the 'renewing' of the Ephesians, all refer, not to any corruption of nature, but to their late wicked life." What? Does their being "renewed in the spirit of their mind" refer only to their wicked life? If you had not affirmed this I should really wonder at your affirming quickly after, "In all other places of Scripture, except 2 Cor. iv, 16, 'renewing' relates only to a vicious course of life;" seeing you

immediately confute yourself by both the following citations: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom. xii, 2), unless the mind be only another expression for "a vicious course of life:" "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures; living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit. iii, 3-5). Do these words imply nothing but "a vicious course of life? no inward corruption at all?" "'But after that the loving-kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; he saved us by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.'" From what? from a vicious course of life only? Nay, but from "foolishness" of heart also, from error, from malice, hatred, envy, evil desire, all which are inward corruptions.

You add: "From all this we may gather that 'God's creating a new man after his own image in righteousness and true holiness' means his erecting the Christian Church with a view to promote righteousness and holiness among men. For 'we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.'" Surely, you do not cite this verse also to prove that the "renewing of our mind" implies no inward change! It must be something more than an outward profession, or the reforming a vicious course of life, by reason of which we are said to be "God's workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus."

These texts, therefore, do manifestly refer to personal, internal holiness; and clearly prove that this is the chief part of that "image of God" in which man was originally created.

The other text which you reconsider is Eccl. vii, 29: "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." But this, you say, does not mean that God made man righteous, but that he made him right, as having those powers, means, and encouragements by a due use of which he may become righteous. In order to prove that this is the true meaning of the words, you affirm, 1. "That man here is not to be understood of Adam, but of all mankind." This cannot be granted without full proof. You affirm, 2. "This appears from the latter part of the sentence: '*They* sought out many inventions.'" Adam and Eve did so in and after their fall. This, therefore, proves nothing. You affirm, 3. "The word *jashar*" (which we translate *upright*) "does not always imply uprightness or righteousness." But this is its proper meaning, as will appear to any who seriously considers the following texts: (1) "When thou shalt do

that which is right in the sight of the Lord" (Deut. xii, 25). It is taken in the very same sense, verse 28; xiii, 18, and xxi, 9. In all these texts it undeniably implies *morally good*, or *righteous*. (2) "A God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is he" (Deut. xxxii, 4). "Good and upright is the Lord" (Psa. xxv, 8). (3) "The word of the Lord is right" (Psa. xxxiii, 4). "The ways of the Lord are right" (Hos. xiv, 9). (4) "Be glad and rejoice, ye righteous" (Psa. xxxii, 11). "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous" (Psa. xxxiii, 1). In the very same sense it occurs in numberless places. As the word is therefore properly applied to God himself, to his word, his providences, and his people (in all which cases it must necessarily mean righteous), we cannot lightly depart from this its proper signification.

But you think there is a necessity of departing from it here; because "to say God created Adam righteous is to affirm a contradiction, or what is inconsistent with the very nature of righteousness. For a righteousness wrought in him without his knowledge or consent would have been no righteousness at all." You may call it by any name you like better. But we must use the old name still; as being persuaded that the love of God, governing the senses, appetites, and passions, however or whenever it is wrought in the soul, is true, essential righteousness.

Nay, "righteousness is right action." Indeed, it is not. Here (as we said before) is your fundamental mistake. It is a right state of mind, which differs from right action as the cause does from the effect. Righteousness is, properly and directly, a right temper or disposition of mind, or a complex of all right tempers.

For want of observing this you say, "Adam could not act before he was created. Therefore, he must exist and use his intellectual powers before he could be righteous." "But, according to this reasoning," as Dr. Jennings observes, "Christ could not be righteous at his birth." You answer, "He existed before he was made flesh." I reply, He did—as God. But the man Christ Jesus did not. Neither, therefore, did he use his intellectual powers. According to your reasoning, then, the man Christ Jesus could not be righteous at his birth.

The doctor adds: "Nay, according to this reasoning God could not be righteous from eternity; because he must exist before he was righteous." (*Jennings's Vindication*.) You answer: "My reasoning would hold even with respect to God, were it true that he ever did begin to exist. But neither the existence nor the holiness of God was prior to each other." (*Taylor's Supplement*,

p. 162.) Nay, but if his existence was not prior to his holiness, if he did not exist before he was holy, your assertion that every being must exist before it is righteous is not true.

Besides (to pursue your reason a little farther), if "God did always exist," yet, unless you can prove that he always acted, it will not clear your argument. For, let him exist millions of ages, he could not be righteous (according to your maxim) before he acted right.

One word more on this article: you say, "My reasoning would hold good, even with respect to God, were it true that he ever did begin to exist." Then I ask concerning the Son of God, did he ever begin to exist? If he did not, he is the one, eternal God (for there cannot be two eternals); if he did, and your reasoning hold good, when he began to exist he was not righteous.

"But St. John saith, 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous.'" Yes, it appears he is, by his doing or practicing "righteousness." "But where doth the Scripture speak one word of a righteousness infused into us?" Where it speaks of "the love of God" (the essence of righteousness) "shed abroad in our hearts."

And cannot God, by his almighty power, infuse any good tempers into us? You answer, "No; no being whatever can do for us that which cannot be at all if it be not our own choice, and the effect of our own industry and exercise. But all good tempers are the effect of our own industry and exercise; otherwise they cannot be at all."

Nay, then, it is certain they cannot be at all. For neither lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, nor any other good temper, can ever be the effect of my own industry and exercise. But I verily believe they may be the effect of God's Spirit, working in me whatsoever pleaseth him. See Isa. xxvi, 12.

You add: "The thing cannot exist unless we choose; because our choosing to do what is right is the very thing which is to exist." No; the thing which is to exist is a right state of mind. And it is certain God can give this to any creature at the very first moment of its existence. Nay, it may be questioned whether God can create an intelligent being in any other state.

"But a habit is gained by repeated acts. Therefore, habits of righteousness could not be created in man." Mere playing upon words! He could be, he was, created full of love. Now, whether you call this a habit or no it is the sum of all righteousness.

"But this love is either under the government of my will, or it is not." It is. The love of God which Adam enjoyed was

under the government of his will. "But if so, it could be righteous only so far as applied to right action in heart and life." Stop here. The love of God is righteousness the moment it exists in any soul; and it must exist before it can be applied to action. Accordingly, it was righteousness in Adam the moment he was created. And yet he had a power either to follow the dictates of that love (in which case his righteousness would have endured forever) or to act contrary thereto; but love was righteousness still, though it was not irresistible.

"I might add Adam's inclination to sin (for he could not sin without a sinful inclination) must be so strong as to overcome his (supposed) inbred propensity to holiness; and so malignant as to expel that principle at once and totally. Consequently, the supposed original righteousness was consistent with a sinful propensity, vastly stronger and more malignant than ever was or can be in any of his posterity; who cannot sin against such resistance, or with such dreadful consequences. Thus, original righteousness in Adam proves far worse than original sin in his posterity."—*Dr. Taylor.*

I have set down your argument at large, that it may appear in its full strength. Now, let us view it more closely: "Adam could not sin without a sinful inclination." The sentence is ambiguous. Either it may mean, "Adam could not choose ill without some sinful temper preceding," and in this sense it is false, or "he could not commit outward sin without first inclining, that is, choosing, so to do." (2) "This his sinful inclination (or temper) was so strong as to overcome his inbred propensity to holiness." It was not any sinful inclination (in this sense) which overcame his propensity to holiness; but strong temptation from without: how strong we know not, and the circumstances of it we know not. (3) "This his sinful inclination was so malignant as to expel that principle at once and totally." Not by any sinful inclination, but by yielding to temptation, he did lose the love and image of God. But that this was totally and at once we have no authority to affirm. (4) "Consequently, original righteousness in Adam was consistent with a sinful propensity, vastly stronger and more malignant than ever was or can be in any of his posterity." It was consistent with no sinful propensity at all, but barely with a power of yielding to temptation. It declined in the same proportion, and by the same degrees, as he did actually yield to this. And when he had yielded entirely and eaten the fruit, original righteousness was no more. Therefore, the fifth proposition, "Thus original righteousness proves to be far worse than original sin," is flourish. What a figure does this fair argument make, now it is turned inside out!

From all this it may appear that the doctrine of original righteousness (as well as that of original sin) hath a firm foundation in Scripture, as well as in the attributes of a wise, holy, and gracious God.

As you do not offer any new argument in your conclusion, I need not spend any time upon it.

You subjoin remarks on Dr. Watts's additions to his book. Some of these deserve a serious consideration :

1. Either the new-created man loved God supremely or not. If he did not, he was not innocent; since the very law and light of nature require such a love to God. If he did, he stood disposed for every act of obedience. And this is true holiness of heart.

You answer (in many words), "The new-created man did not love God supremely. For, before he could love God, the powers of his mind must have been quite finished and actually exercised." And, doubtless, the very moment he was created they were quite finished, and actually exercised, too. For man was not gradually formed by God as a statue is by a human artificer; but "He spake the word, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created." And as light and heat were not subsequent to the creation of the sun, but began to exist with it, so that the moment it existed it shone, so spiritual light and heat, knowledge and love, were not subsequent to the creation of man, but they began to exist together with him. The moment he existed he knew and loved.

2. If the new-made creature had not a propensity to love and obey God, but was in a state of mere indifference to good or evil, then his being put into such a union with flesh and blood, among a thousand temptations, would have been an overbalance on the side of vice. But our reason can never suppose that God, the wise, just, and good, would have placed a new-made creature in such a situation.

This argument cannot be answered, unless it can be showed either (1) that in such a situation there would not have been an overbalance on the side of vice, or (2) that to place a new-made creature in a situation where there was such an overbalance was consistent with the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God.

But, instead of showing, or even attempting to show, this, you feebly say, "I do not think the reason of man by any means sufficient to direct God in what state to make moral agents." (O, that you had always thought so! How much vain, yea, mischievous, reasoning had then been spared!) "But, however Adam's propensities and temptations were balanced, he had freedom to choose evil as well as good." He had. But this is no

answer to the argument, which, like the former, remains in its full force. How could a wise, just, and good God place his creature in such a state as that the scale of evil should preponderate? Although it be allowed, he is, in a measure, free still; the other scale does not "fly up and kick the beam."

3. Notwithstanding all the cavils which have been raised, yet if those two texts (Eph. iv, 24; Col. iii, 10) are considered together their obvious meaning will strike an honest and unbiased reader: the new man, or the principle of true religion in the heart, is created by God after his moral image, in that righteousness and true holiness wherein man was first created.

You answer, "I have endeavored to prove the contrary, and he does not offer to point out any one mistake in my interpretations." I have pointed out more than one.

4. If these are the qualifications with which such a new-made creature should be endued, and these the circumstances wherein, from the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, we should expect him to be situated, then, by a careful survey of what man is now, compared with what he should be, we may easily determine whether man is at present such a creature as the great and blessed God made him at first.

You answer in abundance of words, the sum of which is this: "Our circumstances are, on the whole, far better than Adam's were; for he was under that severe law, 'Transgress and die.'" He was so; but this does not prove the point still. Balancing this single disadvantage (if such it was, for even that may be disputed) with the numerous advantages he was possessed of, with the holiness and happiness which he enjoyed, and might have enjoyed forever, it does by no means appear that the present circumstances of mankind in general are better than Adam's were.

5. God did not give Noah dominion over the brute creatures in so ample a manner as he did to Adam. Fear, indeed, fell on the brutes; but this does not sufficiently preserve man from their outrage. In the innocent state no man would have been poisoned or torn by serpents or lions as now.

You answer: "The second grant runs, 'The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the field, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moves on the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hands they are delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herb I have given you all things.' Now, this grant is more extensive than the first." It is as to food, but not as to dominion. The liberty of eating an animal does not necessarily imply any dominion over it at all. "But the 'fear' and 'dread'

of every beast are the effects of dominion in man and the subjection in brutes." Nay, neither does *fear* necessarily imply dominion. I may fear what has not dominion over me, and what I am not subject to. And those animals may fear me, over which, nevertheless, I have not dominion, neither are they subject to me. I fear every viper, yea, every poisonous spider, and they fear me; yet neither has dominion over the other. Fear, therefore, and dread may be in a high degree; and yet no dominion at all. But they are "'all delivered into our hands?'" Yes; "for meat;" as the very next words explain that expression. Whatever, therefore, it may "import in other Scriptures," the meaning of it here is plain and certain.

6. Would God have exposed the pure and innocent works of his hands to such unavoidable perils and miseries as arise from bears, tigers, serpents, precipices, volcanoes, etc. ?

You answer: "He did expose innocent Adam to a peril and misery greater than all these put together, even to a tempting devil." I reply, (1) This did not imply any unavoidable misery at all. (2) It implied no more peril than God saw was needful, as a test of his obedience. Therefore, this is no parallel case; so this argument also stands unanswered.

7. It has been said, indeed, "If Adam fell into sin though he was innocent, then among a million of creatures every one might sin, though he was as innocent as Adam." I answer, There is a possibility of the event, but the improbability of it is as a million to one. I prove it thus: if a million of creatures were made in an equal probability to stand or fall, and if all the numbers, from one to one million inclusively, were set in a rank, it is plainly a million to one that just any single proposed number of this multitude should fall. Now, the total sum is one of these numbers, that is, the last of them. Consequently, it is a million to one against the supposition that the whole number of men should fall. And this argument will grow still ten thousand times stronger if we suppose ten thousand millions to have lived since the creation.

Your argument stood thus: "If we cannot infer from Adam's transgression that his nature was originally corrupt, neither can we infer from the transgressions of all mankind that their nature is originally corrupt." It is answered, *If a million of creatures were made in an equal probability to stand or fall, it is a million to one they should not all fall.* You reply, "This is no answer to my argument." Surely it is; and a direct answer. That one man sinned does not prove he had a corrupt nature. Why? Because (supposing him free to choose good or evil), it was as probable he should sin as not, there being no odds on one side or the other. But that all men should sin does not prove they have a

corrupt nature; because it is not as probable that all men should sin as that one man should—the odds against it being as a million, or rather ten thousand millions, to one. Either, therefore, we must allow that mankind are more inclined to evil than to good, or we must maintain a supposition so highly improbable as comes very near a flat impossibility.

And thus much you yourself cannot but allow: “The reasoning may hold good where all circumstances agree to make the probability equal with regard to every individual in this supposed million.” And how can the probability be other than equal, if every individual be as wise and as good as Adam? “But be it equal or no,” you say, “the case is not to be estimated by the laws of equal probability, but of infection. For when sin is once entered into a body of men it goes on, not according to the laws of chance” (is this precisely the same with equal probability?), “but the laws, as I may say, of infection.” But how came sin to enter into a body of men? That is the very question. Supposing, first, a body of sinners, sin “may assume the nature of a contagion.” But the difficulty lies against supposing any body of sinners at all. You say, indeed, “One sinner produces another, as the serpent drew in Eve: the first sin and sinner being like a ‘little leaven which leavens the whole lump.’” All this I can understand, supposing our nature is inclined to evil. But if not, why does not one good man produce another, as naturally as one sinner produces another? And why does not righteousness spread as fast and as wide among mankind as wickedness? Why does not this “leaven leaven the whole lump” as frequently, as readily, and as thoroughly as the other? These laws of infection, so called, will therefore stand you in no stead. For, to bring the matter still more to a point, suppose Adam and Eve newly infected by sin; they had then none to infect, having no child. Afterward they repented, and found mercy. Then Cain was born. Now, surely, neither Adam nor Eve would infect him, having suffered so severely for their own sin; which, therefore, they must needs guard him against. How, then, came he to be a sinner? “O, by his own choice; as Seth was righteous.” Well, afterward, both wicked Cain and good Seth begat sons and daughters.

Now, was it not just as probable one should infect his children with goodness as the other with wickedness? How came, then, Cain to transmit vice any more than Seth to transmit virtue? If you say, “Seth did transmit virtue; his posterity was virtuous

until they mixed with the vicious offspring of Cain," I answer, (1) How does that appear? How do you prove that all the posterity of Seth were virtuous? But (2) if they were, why did not this mixture amend the vicious rather than corrupt the virtuous? If our nature is equally inclined to virtue and vice, vice is no more contagious than virtue. How, then, came it totally to prevail over virtue, so that "all flesh had corrupted themselves before the Lord?" Contagion and infection are nothing to the purpose; seeing they might propagate good as well as evil.

Let us go one step farther. Eight persons only were saved from the general deluge. We have reason to believe four, at least, of these were persons truly virtuous.

How, then, came vice to have a majority again among the new inhabitants of the earth? Had the nature of man been inclined to neither, virtue must certainly have had as many votaries as vice. Nay, suppose man a reasonable creature, and supposing virtue to be agreeable to the highest reason, according to all the rules of probability the majority of mankind must in every age have been on the side of virtue.

8. Some have reckoned up a large catalogue of the instances of divine goodness, and would make this as evident a proof that mankind stands in the favor of God, as all the other instances are of a universal degeneracy of man and the anger of God against them. But it is easy to reply. The goodness of God may incline him to bestow a thousand bounties upon criminals; but his justice and goodness will not suffer him to inflict misery in such a universal manner where there has been no sin to deserve it either in parents or children.

You answer: "There is more than enough sin among mankind to deserve all the sufferings God inflicts upon them. And the Scriptures represent those sufferings as disciplinary, for correction and reformation." What, all the sufferings of all mankind? This can in no wise be allowed. Where do the Scriptures say that all sufferings, those of infants in particular, are purely disciplinary, and intended only "for correction and reformation?" Neither can this be reconciled to matter of fact. How did the sufferings of Grecian or Roman infants tend to their correction and reformation? Neither do they tend to the correction or reformation of their parents, or of any other persons under heaven. And even as to adults: if suffering is a proof of universal sin, and universal sin could not take place unless men were naturally prone to evil, then the present sufferings of mankind are a clear and strong evidence that their nature is prone to evil.

9. Notwithstanding all God's provision for the good of man, still the Scripture represents men while they are in their fallen state as destitute of God's favor, and without hope.

You answer: "How can men be destitute of God's favor when he has vouchsafed them a Redeemer?" By destitute of God's favor we mean children of wrath, objects of God's displeasure; and, because they were so, the Redeemer was given to reconcile them to God by his own blood; but, notwithstanding this, while we and they were in our fallen state we were all objects of God's displeasure.

"But how can they be without hope when he 'hath given them the hope of eternal life?'" All men who are not born again, born of God, are without hope at this day. God, indeed, "hath given," but they have not accepted, "the hope of eternal life." Hence the bulk of mankind are still as void of this hope as are the beasts that perish. And so (the Scripture declares) are all men by nature, whatever difference grace may make. "By nature" all are "children of wrath, without hope, without God in the world."

10. Doth that man write the sincere sense of his own mind and conscience who charges the expression, "Adam was on trial for us all," with this inference, "That we are none of us in a state of trial now, but Adam alone was upon trial for us all." We have owned and granted that men are now in a state of trial, but this is upon the foot of the new covenant.

You answer: "What can be more evident than that, according to this scheme, Adam alone was to be upon trial for us all, and that none of Adam's posterity are upon personal trial?" Do you not see the ambiguity in the word *alone*? Or do you see and dissemble it? Dr. Watts supposes that Adam alone—that is, this single person—was on trial for all men. Does it follow from hence that Adam alone—that is, no other person—was ever in a state of trial? Again, if no person but Adam was put on trial for all men, will it follow, "No person but Adam was upon trial at all?" It is really hard to think that you here "speak the sincere sense of your own mind and conscience."

You go on: "He supposes all mankind are still under the original covenant with Adam, according to which he alone was upon trial for us all, and none of his posterity are upon personal trial." He does not suppose any man to be so under that covenant as to supersede his being upon personal trial. Yourself add: "I knew he owned we are upon personal trial, and that all mankind are now under the covenant of grace; but how

can either of these consist with the scheme?" Both of them consist with it perfectly well. (1) Adam alone, or single, was, in some sense, on trial for all mankind, according to the tenor of the old covenant, "Do this and live." (2) Adam fell, and hereby the sentence of death came on him and all his posterity. (3) The new covenant was given, whereby all mankind were put into a state of personal trial; yet still (4) death, the penalty of the old covenant, came (more or less) on all mankind. Now, all this is well consistent with itself, as well as with the tenor of Scripture.

11. Mankind is represented as one collective body in several verses of the fifth chapter to the Romans.

You answer: "St. Paul always distinguishes between Adam and all men, his posterity, and does not consider Adam with all men as one creature."

What then? This does not prove that he does not represent mankind (Adam's posterity) as one collective body.

12. All that is contained in the blessing given to Noah is consistent with the curse which came on all men by the first sin. But that curse is not consistent with the original blessing which was given to Adam.

You answer: "The blessing given to Noah was the very same which was given to Adam." This is palpably false. The blessing which was given to Adam included, (1) Freedom from pain and death. (2) Dominion over the whole brute creation. But that given to Noah did not include either. Yet you affirm, "It is renewed to Noah, without any manner of alteration, after pain and death were introduced into the world." And do pain and death, then, make no manner of alteration?

13. The dominion of the brutes given to Adam was not given to Noah.

You answer: "Our killing and feeding upon them is the highest instance of dominion over them." It is no instance of it at all. I may shoot a bear and then eat him; yet I have no dominion unless it be over his carcass.

THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN.

(Written August 19, 1757.)

BECAUSE of the unspeakable importance of thoroughly understanding this great foundation of all revealed religion, I subjoin an extract (from Mr. Boston's *Fourfold State of Man*) relating both to the original and the present state of man:

"God 'made man upright.' By man we are to understand our first parents, the archetypal pair, the root of mankind. This man was made right (agreeable to the nature of God whose work is perfect) without any imperfection, corruption, or principle of corruption in his body or soul. He was made upright—that is, straight with the will and law of God, without any irregularity in his soul. God made him thus: he did not first make him and then make him righteous; but in the very making of him he made him righteous; righteousness was concreated with him. With the same breath that God breathed into him a living soul he breathed into him a righteous soul.

"This righteousness was the conformity of all the faculties and powers of his soul to the moral law, which implied three things:

"First. His understanding was a lamp of light. He was made after God's image, and consequently could not want knowledge, which is a part thereof. And a perfect knowledge of the law was necessary to fit him for universal obedience, seeing no obedience can be according to the law, unless it proceed from a sense of the command of God requiring it. It is true, Adam had not the law writ on tables of stone; but it was written upon his mind. God impressed it upon his soul, and made him a law to himself, as the remains of it even among the heathens testify. And seeing man was made to be the mouth of the creation, to glorify God in his works, we have grounds to believe he had an exquisite knowledge of the works of God. We have a proof of this in his giving names to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and these such as express their nature: 'Whatsoever Adam called every living thing, that was the name thereof.' And the dominion which God gave him over the creatures, soberly to use them according to his will (still in subordination to the will of God), implies a knowledge of their natures.

"Secondly. His will lay straight with the will of God. There was no corruption in his will, no bent or inclination to evil; for that is sin properly so-called, and, therefore, inconsistent with that uprightness with which it is expressly said he was endued at his creation. The will of man was then naturally inclined to God and goodness, though mutably. It was disposed by its original make to follow the Creator's will, as the shadow does the body. It was not left in an equal balance to good and evil; for then he had not been upright, or conform to the law; which no more can allow the creature not to be inclined to God as his end than it can allow man to be a god to himself.

"Thirdly. His affections were regular, pure, and holy. All his passions, yea, all his sensitive motions and inclinations, were subordinate to his reason and will, which lay straight with the will of God. They were all, therefore, pure from all defilement, free from all disorder or distemper; because in all their motions they were duly subjected to his clear reason and his holy will. He had also an executive power, answerable to his will; a power to do the good which he knew should be done, and which he inclined to do; even to fulfill the whole law of God. If it had not been so, God would not have required perfect obedience of him. For to say that 'the Lord gathereth where he hath not strowed' is but the blasphemy of a slothful servant.

"From what has been said it may be gathered that man's original righteousness was universal and natural, yet mutable.

"1. It was universal, both with respect to the subject of it, the whole man, and the object of it, the whole law; it was diffused through the whole man; it was a blessed leaven that leavened the whole lump. Man was then holy in soul, body, and spirit; while the soul remained untainted, the members of the body were con-

secrated vessels and instruments of righteousness. A combat between reason and appetite, nay, the least inclination to sin, was utterly inconsistent with this uprightness in which man was created; and has been invented to veil the corruption of man's nature, and to obscure the grace of God in Christ Jesus. And as this righteousness spread through the whole man, so it respected the whole law. There was nothing in the law but what was agreeable to his reason and will. His soul was shapen out in length and breadth to the commandment, though exceedingly broad; so that his original righteousness was not only perfect in parts, but in degrees.

"2. As it was universal, so it was natural to him. He was created with it. And it was necessary to the perfection of man as he came out of the hand of God; necessary to constitute him in a state of integrity. Yet,

"3. It was mutable; it was a righteousness which might be lost, as appears from the sad event. His will was not indifferent to good and evil: God set it toward good only, yet did not so fix it that it could not alter; it was movable to evil, but by man himself only.

"Thus was man made originally righteous, being 'created in God's own image' (Gen. i, 27), which consists in 'knowledge, righteousness, and holiness' (Col. iii, 10; Eph. iv, 24). All that God made 'was very good,' according to their several natures (Gen. i, 31). And so man was morally good, being 'made after the image' of him who is 'good and upright' (Psa. xxv, 8). Without this he could not have answered the end of his creation, which was to know, love, and serve his God. Nay, he could not be created otherwise; for he must either have been conform to the law in his powers, principles, and inclinations, or not. If he was, he was righteous; if not, he was a sinner; which is absurd and horrible to imagine.

"And as man was holy, so he was happy. He was full of peace as well as of love. And he was the favorite of heaven. He bore the image of God, who cannot but love his own image. While he was alone in the world he was not alone; for he had free, full 'communion with God.' As yet there was nothing to turn away the face of God from the work of his own hands; seeing sin had not as yet entered, which alone could make the breach.

"He was also lord of the world, universal emperor of the whole earth. His Creator gave him 'dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and every thing that moveth on the earth.' He was God's deputy-governor in the lower world; and this his dominion was an image of God's sovereignty. Thus was man 'crowned with glory and honor,' having 'all things put under his feet.'

"Again: As he had perfect tranquillity in his own breast, so he had a perfect calm without. His heart had nothing to reproach him with; and, without, there was nothing to annoy him. Their beautiful bodies were not capable of injuries from the air. They were liable to no disease or pains; and though they were not to live idle, yet toil, weariness, and sweat of the brows were not known in this state.

"Lastly. He was immortal. He would never have died if he had not sinned. Death was threatened only in case of sin. The perfect constitution of his body, which came out of God's hand, was 'very good;' and the righteousness of his soul removed all inward causes of death. And God's special care of his innocent creature secured him against outward violence. Such were the holiness and the happiness of man in his original state.

"But there is now a sad alteration in our nature. It is now entirely corrupted. Where at first there was nothing evil there is now nothing good. I shall,

"First, prove this.

"Secondly, represent this corruption in its several parts.

“Thirdly, show how man’s nature comes to be thus corrupted.

“First. I shall prove that man’s nature is corrupted, both by God’s word and by men’s experience and observation.

“1. For proof from God’s word let us consider,

“(1) How it takes particular notice of fallen Adam’s communicating his image to his posterity. ‘Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image’ (Gen. v, 3). Compare this with verse 1: ‘In the day that God created man, in the image of God made he him.’ Behold here how the ‘image’ after which man was ‘made’ and the ‘image’ after which he is begotten are opposed. Man was ‘made’ in the likeness of God; a holy and righteous God ‘made’ a holy and righteous creature: but fallen Adam ‘begat’ a son, not in the likeness of God, but in his ‘own likeness;’ corrupt, sinful Adam begat a corrupt, sinful son. For as the image of God included ‘righteousness’ and ‘immortality,’ so this image of fallen Adam included ‘corruption’ and ‘death.’ Moses, giving us in this chapter the first bill of mortality that ever was in the world, ushers it in with this observation—that dying Adam begat mortals. Having sinned, he became ‘mortal,’ according to the threatening. And so he ‘begat a son in his own likeness,’ sinful, and therefore mortal; and so ‘sin and death passed on all.’

“Let us consider (2) that text, ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one’ (Job xiv, 4). Our first parents were unclean; how, then, can we be clean? How could our immediate parents be clean? Or how shall our children be so? The uncleanness here mentioned is a sinful uncleanness; for it is such as makes man’s days ‘full of trouble.’ And it is natural, being derived from unclean parents. ‘How can he be clean that is born of a woman?’ God can ‘bring a clean thing out of an unclean;’ and did so in the case of the man Christ; but no other can. Every person, then, that is born according to the course of nature is born unclean; if the root be corrupt, so are the branches. Neither is the matter mended, though the parents be holy. For they are such by ‘grace,’ not by ‘nature;’ and they beget their children as men, not as holy men; wherefore, as the circumcised parent begets an uncircumcised child, so the holiest parents beget unholy children, and cannot communicate their grace to them as they do their nature.

“(3) Hear our Lord’s determination of the point: ‘That which is born of the flesh is flesh’ (John iii, 6). Behold the corruption of all mankind; all are ‘flesh.’ It does not mean all are frail (though that is a sad truth, too; yea, and our natural frailty is an evidence of our natural corruption); but all are ‘corrupt’ and ‘sinful,’ and that naturally. Hence our Lord argues that, because they are ‘flesh,’ therefore they ‘must be born again,’ or they ‘cannot enter into the kingdom of God’ (verses 3, 5). And as the corruption of our nature evidences the absolute necessity of regeneration, so the necessity of regeneration proves the corruption of our nature. For why should a man need a second birth if his nature were not ruined in the first birth? Even infants must be born again; for this rule admits of no exception; and therefore they were circumcised under the Old Testament, as having ‘the body of the sins of the flesh’ (which is conveyed to them by natural generation), the whole old man, ‘to put off’ (Col. ii, 11). And now, by the appointment of Christ, they are to be baptized; which shows they are unclean, and that there is no salvation for them, but ‘by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.’

“(4) ‘We are by nature children of wrath.’ We are worthy of, and liable to, the wrath of God; and that ‘by nature,’ and, therefore, doubtless, we are by nature sinful creatures. We are condemned before we have done good or evil; under the

curse ere we know what it is. But 'will a lion roar in the forest while he hath no prey?' Will a holy and just God roar in his wrath against man if he be not, by his sin, made a prey for wrath? No; he will not, he cannot. We conclude, then, that, according to the word of God, man's nature is a corrupt nature.

"2. If we consult experience, and observe the case of the world, in the things that are obvious to any person, we shall, by its fruits, easily discover the root of bitterness. I shall instance a few:

"(1) Who sees not a flood of miseries overflowing the world? Every one, at home and abroad, in city and country, in palaces and cottages, is groaning under some displeasing circumstance or other. Some are oppressed with poverty or want; some chastened with pain or sickness; some are lamenting their losses; none is without a cross of one sort or another. No man's condition is so soft but there is some thorn of uneasiness in it. And at length death, 'the wages of sin,' comes, and sweeps all away. Now, what but sin has opened the sluice? There is not a complaint or sigh heard in the world, or a tear that falls from our eye, but it is an evidence that man is fallen as a star from heaven. For God 'distributeth sorrows in his anger' (Job xxi, 17). This is a plain proof of the corruption of nature; forasmuch as those that have not actually sinned have their share of these sorrows; yea, and draw their first breath weeping. There are also graves of the smallest as well as the largest size; and there are never wanting some in the world who, like Rachel, are 'weeping for their children, because they are not.'

"(2) How early does this corruption of nature appear! It is soon discerned which way the bias of the heart lies. Do not the children of fallen Adam, before they can go alone, follow their father's footsteps? What pride, ambition, curiosity, vanity, willfulness, and averseness to good appear in them! And when they creep out of infancy there is a necessity of using 'the rod of correction, to drive away the foolishness that is bound in their heart.'

"(3) Take a view of the outbreakings of sin in the world. 'The wickedness of man is yet great in the earth.' Behold the bitter fruits of corrupt nature! 'By swearing and lying and killing and stealing and committing adultery they break out' (like the breaking forth of waters), 'and blood toucheth blood.' The world is filled with all manner of filthiness, wickedness, and impiety. And whence is this deluge of sin on the earth, but from the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, 'the heart of man,' out of which 'proceed adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness.' Ye may, it may be, thank God that ye are not in these respects 'like other men;' and you have reason; for the corruption of nature is the very same in you as in them.

"(4) Cast your eye upon those terrible convulsions the world is thrown into by the wickedness of men. Lions prey not on lions, nor wolves on wolves; but men bite and devour one another. Upon how slight occasions will men sheathe their swords in one another's bowels! Since Cain shed Abel's blood the world has been turned into a slaughter-house. And the chase has been continued ever since Nimrod began his hunting; as on the earth, so in the seas, the greater still devouring the lesser. Now, when we see the world in such a ferment, every one stabbing another with words or swords, these violent heats among the sons of Adam speak the whole body to be distempered; 'the whole head to be sick, and the whole heart faint.'

"(5) Consider the necessity of human laws, fenced with terrors and severities. Man was made for society; and God himself said, when he created him, it was not good for him to be alone. Yet the case is such now that, in society, he must be

hedged in with thorns. And that from hence we may the better discern the corruption of man's nature, consider: (i) Every man naturally loves to be at full liberty himself; and, were he to follow his inclination, would vote himself out of the reach of all laws, divine and human: yet (ii) no man would willingly adventure to live in a lawless society; and, therefore, even pirates and robbers have laws among themselves. Thus men show they are conscious of the corruption of nature, not daring to trust one another but upon security. (iii) How dangerous soever it is to break through the hedge, yet many will do it daily. They will not only sacrifice their conscience and credit, but, for the pleasure of a few moments, lay themselves open to a violent death by the laws of the land wherein they live. (iv) Laws are often made to yield to man's lusts. Sometimes whole societies break off the fetters, and the voice of laws cannot be heard for the noise of arms; and seldom there is a time wherein there are not some persons so great and daring that the laws dare not look them in the face. (v) Observe even the Israelites, separated to God from all nations of the earth; yet what horrible confusions were among them when 'there was no king in Israel!' How hard was it to reform them when they had the best of magistrates! And how quickly did they turn aside again when they had wicked rulers! It seems one grand design of that sacred history was to discover the corruption of man's nature. (vi) Consider the remains of natural corruption, even in them that believe. Though grace has entered, corruption is not expelled; they find it with them at all times and in all places. If a man have an ill neighbor, he may remove; but should he go into a wilderness, or pitch his tent on a remote rock in the sea, there it will be with him. I need not stand to prove so clear a point; but consider these few things on this head: (1) If it be thus in the green tree, how must it be in the dry? Does so much of the old remain even in those who have received a new nature? How great, then, must that corruption be in those where it is unmixed with renewing grace! (2) Though natural corruption is no burden to a natural man, is he therefore free from it? No, no. Only he is dead, and feels not the sinking weight. Many a groan is heard from a sick bed, but never one from a grave. (3) The good man resists the old nature; he strives to starve it; yet it remains. How must it spread, then, and strengthen itself in the soul, where it is not starved, but fed, as in unbelievers! If the garden of the diligent find him full work in cutting off and rooting up, surely that of the sluggard must needs be 'all grown over with thorns.'

"I shall add but one observation more, that in every man naturally the image of fallen Adam appears: to evince which, I appeal to the consciences of all, in the following particulars:

"(1) If God by his holy law or wise providence put a restraint upon us, to keep us back from any thing, does not that restraint whet the edge of our natural inclinations, and make us so much the keener in our desires? The very heathens were convinced that there is this spirit of contradiction in us, though they knew not the spring of it. How often do men give themselves a loose in those things wherein, if God had left them at liberty, they would have bound up themselves! And is not this a repeating of our fathers' folly, that men will rather climb for forbidden fruit than gather what Providence offers to them, when they have God's express allowance for it?

"(2) Is it not natural to us to care for the body at the expense of the soul? This was one ingredient in the sin of our first parents (Gen. iii, 6). O, how happy might we be if we were but at half the pains about our souls which we bestow upon our bodies! if that question, 'What must I do to be saved?' did but run near

so often through our minds as those, 'What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?'

"(3) Is not every one by nature discontent with his present lot, or with some one thing or other in it? Some one thing is always missing; so that man is a creature given to change. If any doubt of this let them look over all their enjoyments, and, after a review of them, listen to their own hearts, and they will hear a secret murmuring for want of something. Since the hearts of our first parents wandered from God their posterity have a natural disease, which Solomon calls 'the wandering of desire;' literally, 'the walking of the soul' (Eccl. vi, 9). This is a sort of diabolical trance, wherein the soul traverseth the world, feeds itself with a thousand airy nothings, snatcheth at this and the other imagined excellency; goes here and there and every-where, except where it should go. And the soul is never cured of this disease till it takes up its rest in God through Christ.

"(4) Do not Adam's children naturally follow his footsteps in 'hiding' themselves 'from the presence of the Lord' (Gen. iii, 8). We are just as blind in this matter as he was who thought to 'hide himself from the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden.' We promise ourselves more security in a secret sin than in one that is openly committed. 'The adulterer saith, No eye shall see me.' And men will freely do that in secret which they would be ashamed to do in the presence of a child: as if darkness could hide from an all-seeing God. Are we not naturally careless of 'communion with God?' nay, and averse to it? Never was there any communion between God and Adam's children where God himself had not the first word. If he would let them alone they would never inquire after him.

"(5) How loath are men to 'confess sin,' to take guilt and shame to themselves! And was it not thus in the case before us? Adam confesses his nakedness (which, indeed, he could not deny), but not one word does he say about his sin. It is as natural for us to hide sin as to commit it. Many instances of this we see daily; but how many will there be in that day when God 'will judge the secrets of men?' Many a foul mouth will then be seen which is now 'wiped, and saith, I have done no wickedness.'

"Lastly. Is it not natural for us to extenuate our sin, and transfer the guilt to others? As Adam laid the blame of his sin on the woman: and did not the woman lay the blame on the serpent? Adam's children need not be taught this; for before they can well speak, if they cannot deny, they lisp out something to lessen their fault and lay the blame upon another. Nay, so natural is this to men that, in the greatest of sins, they will charge the fault on God himself; blaspheming his providence under the name of ill-luck or misfortune, and so laying the blame of their sin at heaven's door. Thus does 'the foolishness of man pervert his ways;' and his heart fretteth against the Lord. Let us then call Adam Father: let us not deny the relation, seeing we bear his image.

"I proceed to inquire into the corruption of nature in the several parts of it. But who can take the exact dimensions of it in its breadth, length, height, and depth? 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?' However, we may quickly perceive so much of it as may show the absolute necessity of regeneration. Man, in his natural state, is altogether corrupt, through all the faculties of his soul: corrupt in his understanding, his will, his affections, his conscience, and his memory.

"1. The understanding is despoiled of its primitive glory, and covered over with confusion. We are fallen into the hands of our grand adversary, and are deprived

of our two eyes. 'There is none that understandeth,' the very mind and conscience of the natural man are defiled or spoiled. But to point out this corruption of the understanding more particularly, let the following things be considered :

"First. There is a natural weakness in the minds of men with respect to spiritual things. How hard is it to teach them the common principles of religion; to make truths so plain that they may understand them! Try the same persons in other things, speak of the things of this world, and they will understand quickly; but it is hard to make them know how their souls may be saved, or how their hearts may find rest in Christ. Consider even those who have many advantages above the common run of mankind: yet how small is their knowledge of divine things! What confusion still remains in their minds! How often are they mired and 'speak as a child,' even in the matter of practical truths! It is a pitiable weakness that we cannot perceive the things which God has revealed. And it must needs be a sinful weakness, since the law of God requires us to know and believe them.

"Secondly. Man's understanding is naturally overwhelmed with gross 'darkness' in spiritual things. Man, at the instigation of the devil, attempting to break out a new light in his mind, instead of that, broke up the doors of the bottomless pit, by the smoke whereof he was covered with darkness. When God at first made man his mind was a lamp of light; but sin has now turned it into darkness. Sin has closed the window of the soul. It is the land of darkness and the shadow of death, where 'the light is as darkness.' The 'prince of darkness' reigns therein, and nothing but the 'works of darkness' are framed there. That you may be the more fully convinced of this take the following evidences of it:

"(1) The darkness that was upon the face of 'the world' before and at the time that Christ came. When Adam by his sin had lost his light, it pleased God to reveal to him the way of salvation (Gen. iii, 15). This was handed down by holy men before the flood; yet the natural darkness of the mind of man so prevailed as to carry off all sense of true religion from the old world, except what remained in Noah's family. After the flood, as men increased, their natural darkness of mind prevailed again, and the light decayed, till it died out among the generality of mankind, and was preserved only among the posterity of Shem. And even with them it was near setting when God called Abraham 'from serving other gods' (Josh. xxiv, 15). God gave him a more full revelation, which he communicated to his family (Gen. xviii, 19). Yet the natural darkness wore it out at length, save that it was preserved among the posterity of Jacob. In Egypt that darkness so prevailed over them also that a new revelation was necessary. And many a dark cloud got above that during the time from Moses to Christ. When Christ came nothing was to be seen in the Gentile world but 'darkness and cruel habitations.' They were drowned in superstition and idolatry; and whatever wisdom was among their philosophers, 'the world by that wisdom knew not God,' but became more and more vain in their imaginations. Nor were the Jews much wiser: except a few, gross darkness covered them also. Their traditions were multiplied; but the knowledge of those things wherein the life of religion lies was lost. They gloried in outward ordinances, but knew nothing of 'worshiping God in spirit and in truth.'

"Now, what but the natural darkness of men's minds could still thus wear out the light of external revelation? Men did not forget the way of preserving their lives; but how quickly did they forget the way of saving their souls! So that it was necessary for God himself to reveal it again and again. Yea, and a mere external revelation did not suffice to remove this darkness; no, not when it was by Christ in person; there needed also the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Such

is the natural darkness of our minds that it only yields to the blood and Spirit of Christ.

"(2) Every natural man's heart, how refined soever he appear, is full of darkness, disorder, and confusion. The unrenewed part of mankind are rambling through the world like so many blind men, who will neither take a guide, nor can guide themselves, and therefore fall over this and the other precipice into destruction. Some are running after their covetousness, some sticking in the mire of sensuality, others dashing on the rock of pride; every one stumbling on one stone of stumbling or other, as their unmortified passions drive them. And while some are lying along in the way, others are coming up and falling headlong over them. Errors swarm in the world; all the unregenerate are utterly mistaken in the point of true happiness. All desire to be happy; but, touching the way to happiness, there are almost as many opinions as there are men. They are like the blind Sodomites about Lot's house; all seeking to 'find the door,' but in vain. Look into thine own heart (if thou art not born again), and thou wilt see all turned upside down; heaven lying under, and earth at top; look into thy life, and see how thou art playing the madman, eagerly flying after that which is not, and slighting that which is and will be forever. Thus is man's understanding naturally overwhelmed with gross 'darkness' in spiritual things.

"Thirdly. There is in the mind of man a natural bias to evil: let us reflect a little, and we shall find incontestable evidence of it.

"(1) Men's minds have a natural dexterity to do mischief; none are so simple as to want skill for this. None needs to be taught it; but as weeds, without being sown, grow up of their own accord, so does this 'earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom' naturally grow up in us.

"(2) We naturally form gross conceptions of spiritual things, as if the soul were quite immersed in flesh and blood. Let men but look into themselves and they will find this bias in their minds, whereof the idolatry which still prevails so far and wide is an incontestable evidence; for it plainly shows men would have a visible deity; therefore, they change the 'glory of the incorruptible God into an image.' Indeed, the reformation of these nations has banished gross idolatry out of our churches: but heart-reformation alone can banish mental idolatry, subtle and refined image-worship, out of our minds.

"(3) How difficult is it to detain the carnal mind before the Lord! to fix it in the meditation of spiritual things! When God is speaking to man by his word, or they are speaking to him in prayer, the body remains before God, but the world steals away the heart. Though the eyes be closed, the man sees a thousand vanities, and the mind roves hither and thither; and many times the man scarce comes to himself till he is 'gone from the presence of the Lord.' The worldly man's mind does not wander when he is contriving business, casting up his accounts, or telling his money. If he answers you not at first, he tells you he did not hear you, he was busy, his mind was fixed. But the carnal mind employed about spiritual things is out of its element, and therefore cannot fix.

"(4) Consider how the carnal 'imagination' supplies the want of real objects to the corrupt heart. The unclean person is filled with speculative impurities, 'having eyes full of adultery.' The covetous man fills his heart with the world, if he cannot get his hands full of it. The malicious person acts his revenge in his own breast; the envious, within his own narrow soul, sees his neighbor laid low enough; and so every lust is fed by the imagination. These things may suffice to convince us of the natural bias of the mind to evil.

"Fourthly. There is in the carnal mind an opposition to spiritual truths, and an aversion to the receiving them. God has revealed to sinners the way of salvation; he has given his word. But do natural men believe it? Indeed they do not. They believe not the promises of the word; for they who receive them are thereby made 'partakers of the divine nature.' They believe not the threatenings of the word; otherwise they could not live as they do. I doubt not but most if not all of you, who are in a state of nature, will here plead Not Guilty. But the very difficulty you find in assenting to this truth proves the unbelief with which I charge you. Has it not proceeded so far with some that it has steeled their foreheads openly to reject all revealed religion? And though ye set not your mouths as they do against the heavens, yet the same bitter root of unbelief is in you, and reigns and will reign in you, till overcoming grace captivate your minds to the belief of the truth. To convince you of this,

"Consider, 1. How have you learned those truths which you think you believe? Is it not merely by the benefit of your education and of external revelation? You are strangers to the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness with the word in your hearts; and therefore ye are still unbelievers. 'It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father,' saith our Lord, 'cometh unto me.' But ye have not come to Christ; therefore ye have not been 'taught of God.' Ye have not been so taught, and therefore ye have not come; ye believe not.

"Consider, 2. The utter inconsistency of most men's lives with the principles which they profess. They profess to believe the Scripture; but how little are they concerned about what is revealed therein! How unconcerned are ye even about that weighty point, whether ye be born again or not! Many live as they were born, and are like to die as they live, and yet live in peace. Do such believe the sinfulness of a natural state? Do they believe they are 'children of wrath?' Do they believe there is no salvation without regeneration? and no regeneration but what makes man 'a new creature?' O, no! If ye did ye could not live in your sins, live out of Christ, and yet hope for mercy.

"Fifthly. Man is naturally high-minded. Lowliness is not a flower which grows in the field of nature. It is natural to man to think highly of himself and what is his own. 'Vain man would be wise,' so he accounts himself, and so he would be accounted by others. His way is right, because it is 'his own;' 'for every way of a man is right in his own eyes.' He is 'alive without the law;' and therefore his hope is strong and his confidence firm. It is another tower of Babel; the word batters it, yet it stands. One while breaches are made in it, but they are quickly repaired. At another time it is all made to shake; but it is still kept up, till God's Spirit raise a heartquake within the man, which tumbles it down and leaves not one stone upon another.

"Thus much of the corruption of the understanding. Call the understanding '*Ichabod*;' for the glory is departed from it.' Consider this, ye that are yet in the state of nature, and groan ye out your case before the Lord, that the Sun of Righteousness may arise upon you before ye be shut up in everlasting darkness. What avails your worldly wisdom? What do all your attainments in religion avail while your understanding lies wrapped up in darkness and confusion, utterly void of the light of life?

"2. Nor is the will less corrupted than the understanding. It was at first faithful, and ruled with God; but now it is turned traitor against God, and rules with and for the devil. To open this plague of the heart let the following things be considered:

"First. There is in the unrenewed will an utter inability for what is truly good in the sight of God. Indeed, a natural man has a power to choose and do what is materially good; but though he can will what is good and right he can do nothing aright and well. 'Without me'—that is, separate from me—'ye can do nothing;' nothing truly and spiritually good. To this evidence consider:

"(1) How often do men see the good they should choose, and the evil they should refuse; and yet their hearts have no more power to comply with their light than if they were arrested by some invisible hand! Their consciences tell them the right way; yet cannot their will be brought up to it? Else, how is it that the clear arguments on the side of virtue do not bring men over to that side? Although heaven and hell were but a may be, even this would determine the will to holiness, could it be determined by reason. Yet so far is it from this that men, 'knowing the judgment of God, that they who do such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.'

"(2) Let those who have been truly convinced of the spirituality of the law speak and tell if they then found themselves able to incline their hearts toward it. Nay, the more that light shone into their souls, did they not find their hearts more and more unable to comply with it? Yea, there are some who are yet in the devil's camp that can tell from their own experience, light let into the mind cannot give life to the will, or enable it to comply therewith.

"Secondly. There is in the unrenewed will an averseness to good. Sin is the natural man's element, and he is as loath to part with it as the fishes are to come out of the water. He is sick; but utterly averse to the remedy. He loves his disease, so that he loathes the Physician. He is a captive, a prisoner, and a slave; but he loves his conqueror, jailer, and master. He is fond of his fetters, prison, and drudgery, and has no liking to his liberty. For evidence of this averseness to good in the will of man,

"Consider, 1. The untowardness of children. How averse are they to restraint! Are they not 'as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke?' Yea, it is far easier to tame young bullocks to the yoke than to bring young children under discipline. Every man may see in this, as in a glass, that man is naturally wild and willful; that, according to Zophar's observation, he 'is born a wild ass's colt.' What can be said more? He is like a 'colt,' the colt of an 'ass,' the colt of a 'wild ass; a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away?'

"2. What pain and difficulty do men find in bringing their hearts to religious duties! And what a task is it to the natural man to abide at them, to leave the world but a little, and converse with God! When they are engaged in a worldly business or company, time seems to fly, and is gone before they are aware. But how heavily does it drive while a prayer, a sermon, or a Sabbath lasts! With many the Lord's day is the longest day in the week; and therefore they must sleep longer that morning, and go sooner to bed that night than ordinarily they do, that the day may be of a tolerable length. And still their hearts say, 'When will the Sabbath be gone?'

"3. Consider how the will of the natural man 'rebels against the light.' Sometimes he is not able to keep it out; but he 'loves darkness rather than light.' The outer door of the understanding is broken open, but the inner door of the will remains shut. Corruption and conscience then encounter, till conscience is forced to give back; convictions are murdered, and truth is made and 'held' prisoner 'in unrighteousness.'

"4. When the Spirit of the Lord is working a deeper work, yet what 'resistance' does the soul make! When he comes he finds the 'strong man keeping the house,' while the soul is fast asleep in the devil's arms, till the Lord awakens in the sinner, opens his eyes, and strikes him with terror, while the clouds are black above his head, and the sword of vengeance is held to his breast. But what pains is he at to put a fair face on a black heart! to shake off his fears, or make head against them! Carnal reason suggests, If it be ill with him it will be ill with many. When he is beat from this, and sees no advantage in going to hell with company, he resolves to leave his sins, but cannot think of breaking off so soon; there is time enough, and he will do it afterward. When at length he is constrained to part with some sins, others are kept as right hands or right eyes. Nay, when he is so pressed that he must needs say before the Lord he is willing to part with all his idols, yet how long will his heart give the lie to his tongue, and prevent the execution of it!

"Thirdly. There is in the will of man a natural proneness to evil. Men are naturally 'bent to backsliding from God;' they hang (as the word is) toward backsliding. Leave the unrenewed will to itself, it will choose sin and reject holiness; and that as certainly as water poured on the side of a hill will run downward and not upward.

"1. Is not the way of evil the first way wherein the children of men go? Do not their inclinations plainly appear on the wrong side, while they have not cunning to hide them? As soon as it appears we are reasonable creatures, it appears we are sinful creatures. 'Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, till the rod of correction drives it from him.' It is bound in the heart, woven into our very nature; nor will the knots loose; they must be broke asunder by strokes. Words will not do; the rod must be taken to drive it away. Not that the rod of itself will do this; the sad experience of many parents testifies the contrary. And Solomon himself tells you, 'Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.' But the rod is an ordinance of God, appointed for that end; which, like the word, is made effectual by the Spirit's accompanying his own ordinance.

"2. How easily men are led into sin! persuaded to evil, though not to good! Those whom the word cannot draw to holiness Satan leads to wickedness at his pleasure. To learn doing ill is always easy to the unrenewed man; but to learn to do good is as difficult as for 'the Ethiopian to change his skin.' Were the will evenly poised between good and evil one might be embraced with as much ease as the other. But experience testifies it is not; yea, the experience of all ages. How often did the Israelites forsake the almighty God and dote upon the idols of the nations! But did ever one of those nations forsake their idols and grow fond of the God of Israel? No, no. Though man is naturally given to change, it is but from evil to evil; not from evil to good. Surely, then, the will of man stands not in equal balance, but has a cast on the wrong side.

"3. Consider how men go on still in the way of sin, till they meet with a stop from another hand than their own. 'I hid me, and he went on frowardly in the way of his own heart.' If God withdraws his restraining hand, man is in no doubt which way to choose; for the way of sin is 'the way of his heart;' his heart naturally lies that way. As long as God suffereth them, all nations 'walk in their own way.' The natural man is so fixed in evil that there needs no more to show he is off of God's way than to say, He is upon 'his own.'

"Fourthly. There is a natural contrariety, a direct opposition, in the will of man to God himself. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither can be.'

"I have a charge against every unregenerate man and woman, to be proved by the testimony of Scripture and their own conscience—namely, that whether they have the form of religion or no, they are heart-enemies to God, to the Son of God, to the Spirit of God, and to the law of God. Hear this, all ye careless souls, that live at ease in your natural state!

"1. Ye are 'enemies to God in your mind.' Ye are not as yet reconciled to him. The natural enmity is not slain, though perhaps it lies hid and ye do not perceive it. Every natural man is an enemy to God, as he is revealed in his word—to an infinitely holy, just, powerful, and true Being. In effect men are naturally 'haters of God;' and if they could they would certainly make him another than what he is.

"To convince you of this let me propose a few queries: (1) How are your hearts affected to the infinite holiness of God? if ye are not 'partakers of his holiness,' ye cannot be reconciled to it. The heathens, finding they were not like God in holiness, made their gods like themselves in filthiness, and thereby discovered what sort of a god the natural man would have. God is holy. Can an unholy creature love his unspotted holiness? Nay, it is 'the righteous' only that can 'give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.' God is light. Can creatures of darkness, and that walk in darkness, rejoice therein? Nay, 'every one that doeth evil hateth the light.' For what communion hath light with darkness? (2) How are your hearts affected to the justice of God? There is not a man who is wedded to his sins but would be content with the blood of his body to blot that letter out of the name of God. Can the malefactor love his condemning judge, or an unjustified sinner a just God? No; he cannot. And hence, since men cannot get the doctrine of his justice blotted out of the Bible, yet it is such an eye-sore to them that they strive to blot it out of their minds; they ruin themselves by presuming on his mercy, 'saying in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.' (3) How are ye affected to the omniscience and omnipresence of God? Men naturally would rather have a blind idol than all-seeing God; and therefore do what they can, as Adam did, to 'hide themselves from the presence of the Lord.' They no more love an omnipresent God than the thief loves to have the judge witness to his evil deeds. (4) How are ye affected to the truth of God? How many hope that God will not be true to his word! There are thousands that hear the Gospel and hope to be saved who never experienced the new birth, nor do at all concern themselves in that question—whether they are born again or not. Our Lord's words are plain and peremptory: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' What, then, are such hopes but real hopes that God will recall his word, and that Christ will prove a false prophet? (5) How are they affected to the power of God? None but new creatures can love him for it. Every natural man would contribute to the building another tower of Babel, to hem it in. On these grounds I declare every unrenewed man 'an enemy to God.'

"2. Ye are the enemies to the Son of God. That enmity to Christ is in your hearts, which would have made you join the 'husbandmen who killed the heir and cast him out of the vineyard.' 'Am I a dog,' ye will say, 'to have so treated my dear Saviour?' So said Hazaël in another case. Yet how did he act? Many call him *dear*, to whom their sins are ten times dearer than their Saviour. He is no otherwise dear to them than as they abuse his death for the peaceable enjoyment of their sins; that they may live as they list in this world, and, when they die, be kept out of hell. To convince you of this I will lay before you the enmity of your hearts against Christ in all his offices:

“(1) Every unregenerate man is an enemy to Christ in his prophetic office. For evidence of this, consider,

“(i) The entertainment he meets with when he comes to teach souls ‘inwardly’ by his ‘Spirit.’ Men do what they can to stop their ears, that they may not hear his voice. They ‘always resist the Holy Ghost;’ they ‘desire not the knowledge of his ways.’ The old calumny is thrown upon him again, ‘He is mad; why hear ye him?’ ‘The spirit of bondage’ is accounted by many mere distraction and melancholy; men thus blaspheming God’s work, because they themselves are beside themselves, and cannot judge of those matters.

“(ii) Consider the entertainment he meets with when he comes to teach men outwardly by his word.

“1st. His written word, the Bible, is slighted. Many lay their Bibles with their Sunday clothes. Alas! the dust about your Bibles is a witness of the enmity of your hearts against Christ as a prophet. And of those who read them oftener, how few are there that read them as the word of the Lord to their souls in particular, so as to keep up communion with God therein! Hence, they are strangers to the solid comfort of the Scriptures; and if at any time they are dejected it is something else, and not the word of God, which revives their drooping spirits.

“2d. Christ’s word preached is despised. Men can, without remorse, make to themselves one silent Sabbath after another. And, alas! when they ‘tread his courts’ how little reverence and awe of God appears on their spirits! Many stand like brazen walls before the word, on whom it makes no breach at all. Nay, not a few are growing worse and worse, notwithstanding ‘precept upon precept.’ What tears of blood are sufficient to lament this! Remember, we are but the ‘voice of one crying.’ The Speaker is in heaven; yet ye refuse him that speaketh, and prefer the prince of darkness before the Prince of Peace. A dismal darkness overspread the world by Adam’s fall, more terrible than if the sun and moon had been extinguished. And it must have covered us eternally had not the ‘grace of God appeared’ to dispel it. But we fly from it, and, like the wild beasts, lay ourselves down in our dens. Such is the enmity of the hearts of men against Christ in his prophetic office.

“(2) The natural man is an enemy to Christ in his priestly office. He is appointed of the Father ‘a priest forever,’ that, by his sacrifice and intercession alone, sinners may have access to, and peace with, God. But ‘Christ crucified’ is ever a stumbling-block and foolishness to the unregenerate part of mankind.

“None of Adam’s children naturally incline to receive the blessing in borrowed robes, but would always climb up to heaven on a thread spun out their own bowels. They look on God as a great Master, and themselves as his servants, that must work and win heaven as their wages. Hence, when conscience awakes, they think that, to be saved, they must answer the demands of the law; serve God as well as they can, and pray for mercy wherein they come short. And thus many come to duties that never come out of them to Christ.

“Indeed, the natural man going to God in duties, will continually be found, either to go without a mediator, or with more mediators than one. Nature is blind, and therefore venturous; it puts men on going immediately to God without Christ. Converse with many hearers of the Gospel on their hopes of salvation, and the name of Christ will scarce be heard from their mouth. Ask them how they think to find the pardon of sin, they say they look for mercy because God is a merciful God, and this is all they have to trust in. Others look for mercy for Christ’s sake. But how do they know Christ will take their plea in hand? Why, they

pray, mourn, confess, and have great desires. So they have something of their own to recommend them to him. They were never made 'poor in spirit,' and brought empty-handed to God to lay the stress of all on his atoning blood.

"(3) The natural man is an enemy to Christ in his kingly office.

"How unwilling are natural men to submit to the laws and discipline of his kingdom. However they may be brought to some outward submission to the king of saints, yet sin always retains its throne in their hearts, and they are 'serving divers lusts and pleasures.' None but those in whom Christ is formed do really put the crown on his head. None but these receive the kingdom of Christ within them, and let him set up and put down in their souls as he will. As for others, any lord shall sooner have the rule over them than the Lord of glory. They kindly entertain his enemies, and will never absolutely resign themselves to his government. Thus you see the natural man is an enemy to Jesus Christ in all his offices.

"3. Ye are enemies to the Spirit of God: he is the Spirit of holiness. The natural man is unholy, and loves to be so; and, therefore, 'resists the Holy Ghost.' The work of the Spirit is to 'convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.' But, O, how do men strive to ward off these convictions, as they would a blow that threatened their life! If the Spirit dart them in so that they cannot avoid them, does not the heart say, 'Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?' And, indeed, they treat him as an enemy, doing their utmost to stifle their convictions, and to murder these harbingers that come to prepare the way of the Lord into the soul. Some fill their hands with business to put convictions out of their head, as Cain, who fell to building a city. Some put them off with fair promises, as Felix did; some sport or sleep them away. And how can it be otherwise? For it is the work of the Holy Spirit to subdue lusts, and burn up corruption. How then can he whose lusts are dear as his life fail of being an enemy to Him?

"Lastly. Ye are enemies to the law of God. Though the natural man 'desires to be under the law,' as a covenant of works; yet, as it is a rule of life, he 'is not subject to it, neither indeed can be.' For, (1) Every natural man is wedded to some sin, which he cannot part with. And as he cannot bring up his inclinations to the law, he would fain bring down the law to his inclinations. And this is a plain standing evidence of the enmity of his heart against it. (2) The law, set home on the awakened conscience in its spirituality, irritates corruption. It is as oil to the fire, which, instead of quenching, makes it flame the more. 'When the commandment comes, sin revives.' What reason can be assigned for this but the natural enmity of the heart against the holy law? We conclude, then, that the unregenerate are heart-enemies to God, his Son, his Spirit, and his law; that there is a natural contrariety, opposition, and enmity in the will of man to God himself and his holy will.

"Fifthly. The unrenewed will is wholly perverse in reference to the end of man. Man is a merely dependent being, having no existence or goodness originally from himself; but all he has is from God, as the first cause and spring of all perfection, natural and moral. Dependence is woven into his very nature, so that, should God withdraw from him, he would sink into nothing. Since then, whatever man is, he is of Him, surely whatever he is, he should be to Him; as the waters which came out of the sea return thither again. And thus man was created, looking directly to God as his last end; but, falling into sin, he fell off from God, and turned into himself. Now this infers a total apostasy and universal corruption in man; for where the last end is changed there can be no real goodness. And this is the case of all men in their natural state. They seek not God, but themselves. Hence, though

many fair shreds of morality are among them, yet 'there is none that doeth good, no, not one.' For though some of them 'run well,' they are still off the way; they never aim at the right mark. Whithersoever they move, they cannot move beyond the circle of self. They seek themselves, they act for themselves; their natural, civil, and religious actions, from whatever spring they come, do all run into and meet in this dead sea.

"Most men are so far from making God their end in their natural and civil actions that he is not in all their thoughts. They eat and drink for no higher end than their own pleasure or necessity. Nor do the drops of sweetness God has put into the creatures raise their souls toward that ocean of delights that are in the Creator. And what are the natural man's civil actions, such as buying, selling, working, but fruit to himself? Yea, self is the highest end of unregenerate men, even in their religious actions. They perform duties for a name, for some worldly interest, or, at best, in order to escape from hell. They seek not God at all, but for their own interest, so that God is only the means, and self their end.

"Thus have I given a rude draught of man's will in his natural state, drawn from Scripture and our own experience. Now, since all must be wrong where the understanding and will are so corrupt, I shall briefly dispatch what remains.

"3. The *affections* are corrupted, wholly disordered and distempered. They are like an unruly horse, that either will not receive or violently runs away with the rider. Man's heart is naturally a mother of abominations. 'For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness.' The natural man's affections are wholly misplaced; he is a spiritual monster. His heart is where his feet should be, fixed on earth; his heels are lifted up against heaven, which his heart should be set on; his face is toward hell, his back toward heaven; he loves what he should hate, and hates what he should love; joys in what he ought to mourn for, and mourns for what he should rejoice in; glories in his shame, and is ashamed of his glory; abhors what he should desire, and desires what he should abhor. If his affections are set on lawful objects, they are either excessive or defective. These objects have either too little of them or too much. But spiritual things have always too little.

"Here is 'a threefold cord' against heaven, not easily broken—a blind mind, a perverse will, disordered affections. The mind, swelled with pride, says, The man should not stoop; the will, opposite to the will of God, says, He will not; and the corrupt affections, rising against the Lord, in defense of the corrupt will, say, He shall not. And thus we stand out against God, till we are created anew by Christ Jesus.

"(4) The *conscience* is corrupt and defiled. It cannot do its work, but according to the light it hath to work by. Wherefore, seeing 'the natural man discerneth not spiritual things,' his conscience is quite useless in that point. It may indeed check far grosser sins; but spiritual sins it discerns not. Thus it will fly in the face of many for drunkenness, who yet have a profound peace though they live in unbelief, and are utter strangers to spiritual worship and 'the life of faith.' And the light of his conscience being faint and languishing, even in the things which it does reach, its incitements to duty and struggles against sin are very remiss and easily got over. But there is also a false light in the dark mind, which often 'calls evil good, and good evil.' And such a conscience is like a blind and furious horse, which violently runs down all that comes in his way. Indeed, whenever conscience is awakened by the spirit of conviction it will rage and roar, and put the whole man in a consternation. It makes the stiff heart to tremble, and the knees to bow;

sets the eyes a-weeping, the tongue a-confessing. But still it is an evil conscience, which naturally leads only to despair; and will do it effectually, unless either sin prevails over it to lull it asleep, as in the case of Felix, or the blood of Christ prevail over it, sprinkling and 'purging it from dead works.'

"Thus is man by nature wholly corrupted. But whence came this total corruption of our nature? That man's nature was corrupt, the very heathens perceived; but how 'sin entered' they could not tell. But the Scripture is very plain in the point: 'By one man sin entered into the world.' 'By one man's disobedience many' (all) 'were made sinners.' Adam's sin corrupted man's nature, and leavened the whole lump of mankind. We putrified in Adam as our root. The root was poisoned, and so the branches were envenomed. The vine turned 'the vine of Sodom,' and so the grapes became 'grapes of gall.' Adam, by his sin, became not only guilty, but corrupt; and so transmits guilt and corruption to his posterity. By his sin he stripped himself of his original righteousness and corrupted himself. We were in him representatively, as our moral head; we were in him seminally, as our natural head. Hence we fell in him (as Levi 'paid tithes' when 'in the loins of Abraham'); 'by his disobedience' we 'were made sinners;' his first sin is imputed to us. And we are left without that original righteousness which, being given to him as a common person, he cast off. And this is necessarily followed, in him and us, by the corruption of our whole nature; righteousness and corruption being two contraries, one of which must always be in man. And Adam, our common father, being corrupt, so are we; for 'who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?'

"It remains only to apply this doctrine. And, first, for *information*: is man's nature wholly corrupted? Then, 1. No wonder the grave opens its devouring mouth for us as soon as the womb has cast us forth. For we are all, in a spiritual sense, dead-born; yea, and 'filthy' (Psa. xiv, 3), noisome, rank, and stinking, as a corrupt thing; so the word imports. Let us not complain of the miseries we are exposed to at our entrance, or during our continuance, in the world. Here is the venom that has poisoned all the springs of earthly enjoyments. It is the corruption of human nature, which brings forth all the miseries of life.

"2. Behold here, as in a glass, the spring of all the wickedness, profaneness, and formality in the world. Every thing acts agreeable to its own nature; and so corrupt man acts corruptly. You need not wonder at the sinfulness of your own heart and life, nor at the sinfulness and perverseness of others. If a man be crooked, he cannot but halt; and if the clock be set wrong, how can it point the hour right?

"3. See here why sin is so pleasant and religion such a burden to men. Sin is natural, holiness not so. Oxen cannot feed in the sea, nor fishes in the fruitful field. A swine brought into a palace would prefer the mire. And corrupt nature tends ever to impurity.

"4. Learn from hence the nature and necessity of regeneration. (1) The nature: it is not a partial but a total change. Thy whole nature is corrupted; therefore, the whole must be renewed. 'All things' must 'become new.' If a man who had received many wounds were cured of all but one, he might still bleed to death. It is not a change made by human industry, but by the almighty Spirit of God. A man must be 'born of the Spirit.' Our nature is corrupt, and none but the God of nature can change it. Man may pin a new life to an old heart, but he can never change the heart. (2) The necessity: It is absolutely necessary in order to salvation. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' No

unclean thing can enter 'the new Jerusalem.' But thou art by nature wholly unclean. Deceive not thyself. No mercy of God, no blood of Christ, will bring an unregenerate sinner to heaven. For God will never open a fountain of mercy to wash away his own holiness and truth; nor did Christ shed his precious blood to blot out the truths of God. Heaven! What would you do there, who are not born again? A holy Head, and corrupt members! A Head full of treasures of grace, members filled with treasures of wickedness! Ye are no ways adapted to the society above, more than beasts to converse with men. Could the unrenewed man go to heaven, he would go to it no otherwise than now he comes to the duties of holiness; that is, leaving his heart behind him.

"We may apply this doctrine, secondly, for *lamentation*. Well may we lament thy case, O natural man; for it is the saddest case one can be in out of hell. It is time to lament for thee; for thou art dead already, dead while thou livest. Thou carriest about a dead soul in a living body; and, because thou art dead, canst not lament thy own case. Thou 'hast no good in thee;' thy soul is a mass of darkness, rebellion, and vileness before God. Thou 'canst do no good;' thou canst do nothing but sin. For thou art 'the servant of sin,' and, therefore, free from righteousness; thou dost not, canst not, meddle with it. Thou art 'under the dominion of sin;' a dominion where righteousness can have no place. Thou art a child and a servant of the devil as long as thou art in a state of nature. But, to prevent any mistake, consider that Satan hath two kinds of servants. There are some employed, as it were, in coarser work. These bear the devil's mark in their foreheads; having no form of godliness, not so much as performing the external duties of religion, but living apparently as sons of earth, only minding earthly things. Whereas, others are employed in more refined work, who carry his mark in their right hand, which they can and do hide, by a form of religion, from the view of the world. These sacrifice to the corrupt mind, as the other to the flesh. Pride, unbelief, self-pleasing, and the like spiritual sins prey on their corrupted, wholly corrupted, souls. Both are servants of the same house, equally void of righteousness.

"Indeed, how is it possible thou shouldest be able to do any thing good, whose nature is wholly corrupt? 'Can an evil tree bring forth good fruit? Do men gather grapes of thorns? If then thy nature be totally evil, all thou doest is certainly so too.

"Hear, O sinner, what is thy case! Innumerable sins compass thee about; floods of impurities overwhelm thee. Sins of all sorts roll up and down in the dead sea of thy soul, where no good can breathe, because of the corruption there. Thy lips are unclean; the opening of thy mouth is as the opening of a grave, full of stench and rottenness. Thy natural actions are sin; for 'when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?' (Zech. vii, 6.) Thy civil actions are sin: 'The plowing of the wicked is sin' (Prov. xxi, 4). Thy religious actions are sin: 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.' The thoughts and imaginations of thy heart are 'only evil continually.' A deed may be soon done, a word soon spoken, a thought pass, but each of these is an item in thy accounts. O sad reckoning! As many thoughts, words, actions, so many sins; and the longer thou livest, thy accounts swell the more. Should a tear be dropped for every sin, thine eyes must be 'fountains of tears.' For nothing but sin comes from thee; thy heart frames nothing but evil imaginations; there is nothing in thy life but what is framed by thy heart; therefore, there is nothing in thy heart or life but evil.

"And all thy religion, if thou hast any, is lost labor if thou art not born again:

truly then thy duties are sins. Would not the best wine be loathsome in a foul vessel? So is the religion of an unregenerate man. Thy duties cannot make thy corrupt soul holy; but thy corrupt heart makes them unclean. Thou wast wont to divide thy works into two sorts; to count some good and some evil. But thou must count again, and put all under one head; for God writes on them all, 'Only evil.'

"And thou canst not help thyself. What canst thou do to take away thy sin, who art wholly corrupt? Will mud and filth wash our filthiness? And wilt thou purge out sin by sinning? Job took a potsherd to scrape himself, because his hands were as full of boils as his body. This is the case of thy corrupt soul, so long as thou art in a state of nature. Thou art poor indeed, extremely 'miserable and poor;' thou hast no shelter but a refuge of lies; no garment for thy soul but 'filthy rags;' nothing to nourish it but husks that cannot satisfy. More than that, thou hast got such a bruise in the loins of Adam, that thou art 'without strength,' unable to do any thing. Nay, more than all this, thou canst not so much as seek aright, but liest helpless, as an infant exposed in the open field.

"O, that ye would believe this sad truth! How little is it believed in the world! Few are concerned to have their evil lives reformed, but fewer far to have their evil nature changed. Most men know not what they are; as the eye, which, seeing many things, never sees itself. But until ye know every one "the plague of his own heart," there is no hope of your recovery. Why will ye not believe the plain testimony of Scripture? Alas! that is the nature of your disease. 'Thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.' Lord, open their eyes, before they lift them up in hell and see what they will not see now!

"Meantime let us have a special eye upon the corruption and sin of our nature. What avails it to take notice of other sins while this mother-sin is unnoticed? This is a weighty point; in speaking to which I shall,

"1. Point at some evidences of men's overlooking the sin of their nature. As (1) Men's being so confident of themselves, as if they were in no danger of gross sins. Many would take heinously such a caution as Christ gave his apostles, 'Take heed of surfeiting and drunkenness.' They would be ready to cry out, 'Am I a dog?' It would raise the pride of their heart, not their fear and trembling. And all this is a proof that they know not the corruption of their own nature. (2) Untenderness toward them that fall. Many in this case cast off all bowels of compassion; a plain proof that they do not know or 'consider themselves, lest they also be tempted.' Grace, indeed, does make men zealous against sin, in others as well as in themselves. But eyes turned inward to the corruption of nature clothe them with pity and compassion, and fill them with thankfulness, that they were not the persons left to be such spectacles of human frailty. (3) Men's venturing so boldly on temptation, in confidence of their coming off fairly. Were they sensible of the corruption of their nature they would beware of entering on the devil's ground, as one girt about with bags of gunpowder would be loath to walk where sparks of fire were flying.

"2. I shall mention a few things in which ye should have a special eye to the sin of your nature: (1) In your application to Christ. When you are with the Physician, O, forget not this disease! They never yet knew their errand to Christ who went not to him for the sin of their nature; for his blood to take away the guilt and his Spirit to break the power of it. Though ye should lay before him a catalogue of sins which might reach from earth to heaven, yet, if you omit this, you

have forgot the best part of the errand a poor sinner has to the Physician of souls. (2) Have a special eye to it in your repentance. If you would repent indeed, let the streams lead you up to the fountain, and mourn over your corrupt nature, as the cause of all sin in heart, word, and work. 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' (3) Have a special eye to it in your mortification. 'Crucify the flesh, with its affections and desires.' It is the root of bitterness which must be struck at, else we labor in vain. In vain do we go about to purge the streams, if we are at no pains about the muddy fountain. (4) Ye are to eye this in your daily walk. He that would walk uprightly must have one eye upward to Jesus Christ, another inward to the corruption of his own nature.

"I shall offer some reasons why we should especially observe the sin of our nature. (1) Because of all sins it is the most extensive and diffusive. It goes through the whole man and spoils all. Other sins mar particular parts of the image of God, but this defaces the whole. It is the poison of the old serpent cast into the fountain, and so infects every action, every breathing of the soul.

"(2) It is the cause of all particular sins, both in our hearts and lives. 'Out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries,' and all other abominations. It is the bitter fountain; and particular lusts are but rivulets running from it, which bring forth into the life a part only, not the whole, of what is within.

"(3) It is virtually all sins; for it is the seed of all which want but the occasion to set up their heads. Hence it is called 'a body of death,' as consisting of the several members which constitute that 'body of sins' (Col. ii, 11) whose life lies in spiritual death. It is the cursed ground, fit to bring forth all manner of noxious weeds. Never did every sin appear in the conversation of the vilest wretch that ever lived. But look into thy nature, and thou mayst see all and every sin in the root thereof. There is a fullness of all unrighteousness there—atheism, idolatry, adultery, murder. Perhaps none of these appear to thee in thy heart; but there is more in that unfathomable depth of wickedness than thou knowest.

"(4) The sin of our nature is of all sins the most fixed and abiding. Sinful actions are transient, though the guilt and stain of them may remain. But the corruption of nature passes not away. It remains in its full power, by night and by day, at all times, till nature is changed by converting grace.

"You may observe three things in the corrupt heart: (i) There is the corrupt nature, the evil bent of the heart, whereby men are unapt for all good, and fitted for all evil. (ii) There are particular lusts or dispositions of that corrupt nature, such as pride, passion, covetousness. (iii) There is one of these stronger than all the rest—'the sin which doth so easily beset us.' So that the river divides into many streams, whereof one is greater than the rest. The corruption of nature is the river-head, which has many particular lusts wherein it runs; but it mainly disburdens itself into that which we call the predominant sin. But as in some rivers the main stream runs not always in the same channel, so the besetting sin may change; as lust in youth may be succeeded by covetousness in old age. Now, what does it avail to reform in other things, while the reigning sin retains its full power? What if a particular sin be gone? If the sin of our nature keep the throne, it will set up another in its stead—as when a water-course is stopped in one place it will break forth in another. Thus some cast off their prodigality, but covetousness comes in its stead. Some quit their profaneness, but the same stream runs in the other channel of self-righteousness.

"That you may have a full view of the sin of your nature, I would recommend

to you three things : 1. Study to know the spirituality and the extent of the law of God ; for that is the glass wherein you may see yourselves. 2. Observe your hearts at all times, but especially under temptation. Temptation is a fire that brings up the scum of the unregenerate heart. 3. Go to God through Jesus Christ for illumination by his Spirit. Say unto him, 'What I know not, teach thou me !' and be willing to take in light from the word. It is by the word the Spirit teacheth ; but unless he teach, all other teaching is to little purpose. You will never see yourself aright till he light his candle in your breast. Neither the fullness and glory of Christ nor the corruption and vileness of our nature ever were or can be rightly learned but where the Spirit of Christ is the teacher.

"To conclude : Let the consideration of what has been said commend Christ to you all. Ye that are brought out of your natural state, be humble ; still coming to Christ, still cleaving to him, for the purging out what remains of your natural corruption. Ye that are yet in your natural state, what will ye do ? Ye must die ; ye must stand at the judgment-seat of God. Will you lie down and sleep another night at ease in this case ! See ye do it not. Before another day you may be set before his dreadful tribunal, in the grave-clothes of your corrupt state, and your vile souls cast into the pit of destruction, to be forever buried out of God's sight ; for I testify unto you, there is no peace with God, no pardon, no heaven for you in this state. There is but a step betwixt you and eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord. If the brittle thread of life, which may be broke with a touch in a moment, or ever you are aware, be broke while you are in this state, you are ruined forever and without remedy. But come ye speedily to Jesus Christ. He hath cleansed as vile souls as yours. 'Confess your sins,' and he will both 'forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness.'"

THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN ENGLAND.

(1744.)

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace !—Luke xix, 41, 42.

1. Now, what can an impartial person think concerning the present state of religion in England ? Is there a nation under the sun which is so deeply fallen from the very first principles of all religion ? Where is the country in which is found so utter a disregard to even heathen morality ; such a thorough contempt of justice and truth, and all that should be dear and honorable to rational creatures ?

What species of vice can possibly be named, even of those that nature itself abhors, of which we have not had for many years a plentiful and still increasing harvest ? What sin remains, either in Rome or Constantinople, which we have not imported long ago (if it was not of our native growth), and improved upon ever since ? Such a complication of villainies of every kind, considered with all their aggravations, such a scorn of whatever bears

the face of virtue, such injustice, fraud, and falsehood; above all, such perjury and such a method of law, we may defy the whole world to produce.

What multitudes are found throughout our land who do not even profess any religion at all! And what numbers of those who profess much confute their profession by their practice! yea, and perhaps by their exorbitant pride, vanity, covetousness, rapaciousness, or oppression cause the very name of religion to stink in the nostrils of many (otherwise) reasonable men.

2. "However, we have many thousands still of truly virtuous and religious men." Wherein does their religion consist? In righteousness and true holiness, in love stronger than death, fervent gratitude to God, and tender affection to all his creatures? Is their religion the religion of the heart, a renewal of soul in the image of God? Do they resemble him they worship? Are they free from pride, from vanity, from malice and envy, from ambition and avarice, from passion and lust, from every uneasy and unlovely temper? Alas! I fear neither they (the greater part at least) nor you know what this religion means, or have any more notion of it than the peasant that holds the plow of the religion of a Gymnosophist.

It is well if the genuine religion of Christ has any more alliance with what you call religion than with the Turkish pilgrimages to Mecca, or the popish worship of our Lady of Loretto. Have you not substituted, in the place of the religion of the heart, something (I do not say equally sinful, but) equally vain and foreign to the worshiping of God "in spirit and in truth?" What else can be said even of prayer (public or private) in the manner wherein you generally perform it? as a thing of course, running round and round in the same dull track, without either the knowledge or love of God, without one heavenly temper, either attained or improved. O, what mockery of God is this!

And yet even this religion, which can do you no good, may do you much harm. Nay, it is plain it does; it daily increases your pride, as you measure your goodness by the number and length of your performances. It gives you a deep contempt of those who do not come up to the full tale of your virtues. It inspires men with a zeal which is the very fire of hell, furious, bitter, implacable, unmerciful; often to a degree that extinguishes all compassion, all good nature, and humanity. Insomuch that the execrable fierceness of spirit, which is the natural fruit of such a religion, hath many times, in spite of all ties, divine and human,

broke out into open violence, into rapine, murder, sedition, rebellion, civil war, to the desolation of whole cities and countries.

Tantum hæc religio potuit suadere malorum!
(So much mischief this religion does !)

3. Now, if there be a God, and one that is not a mere idle spectator of the things that are done upon the earth, but a rewarder of men and nations according to their works, what can the event of these things be? It was reasonable to believe that he would have risen long ago and maintained his own cause, either by sending the famine or pestilence among us, or by pouring out his fury in blood. And many wise and holy men have frequently declared that they daily expected this; that they daily looked for the patience of God to give place, and judgment to rejoice over mercy.

4. Just at this time, when we wanted little of "filling up the measure of our iniquities," two or three clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to "call sinners to repentance." In two or three years they had sounded the alarm to the utmost borders of the land. Many thousands gathered together to hear them; and in every place where they came many began to show such a concern for religion as they had never done before. A stronger impression was made on their minds of the importance of things eternal, and they had more earnest desires of serving God than they had ever had from their earliest childhood. Thus did God begin to draw them toward himself with the cords of love, with the bands of a man.

Many of these were in a short time deeply convinced of the number and heinousness of their sins. They were also made thoroughly sensible of those tempers which are justly hateful to God and man, and of their utter ignorance of God, and entire inability either to know, love, or serve him. At the same time they saw in the strongest light the insignificancy of their outside religion; nay, and often confessed it before God, as the most abominable hypocrisy. Thus did they sink deeper and deeper into that repentance which must ever precede faith in the Son of God.

And from hence sprung "fruits meet for repentance." The drunkard commenced sober and temperate; the whoremonger abstained from adultery and fornication; the unjust from oppression and wrong. He that had been accustomed to curse and swear for many years now swore no more. The sluggard began to work with his hands, that he might eat his own bread. The miser

learned to deal his bread to the hungry, and to cover the naked with a garment. Indeed, the whole form of their life was changed; they had "left off doing evil, and learned to do well."

5. But this was not all. Over and above this outward change they began to experience inward religion. "The love of God was shed abroad in their hearts," which they continue to enjoy to this day. They "love him, because he first loved us," and withheld not from us his Son, his only Son. And this love constrains them to love all mankind, all the children of the Father of heaven and earth; and inspires them with every holy and heavenly temper, the whole mind that was in Christ. Hence it is that they are now uniform in their behavior, unblamable in all manner of conversation. And in whatsoever state they are they have learned therewith to be content; insomuch that now they can "in every thing give thanks." They more than patiently acquiesce, they rejoice and are exceeding glad in all God's dispensations toward them. For as long as they love God (and that love no man taketh from them), they are always happy in God. Thus they calmly travel on through life, being never weary nor faint in their minds, never repining, murmuring, or dissatisfied, casting all their care upon God, till the hour comes that they should drop this covering of earth and return unto the great Father of spirits. Then, especially, it is that they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." You who credit it not, come and see. See these living and dying Christians.

Happy while on earth they breathe;
Mightier joys ordained to know,
Trampling on sin, hell, and death,
To the third heaven they go.

Now, if these things are so, what reasonable man can deny (supposing the Scriptures to be true) that God is now visiting this nation in a far other manner than we had cause to expect? Instead of pouring out his fierce displeasure upon us, he hath made us yet another tender of mercy; so that even when sin did most abound, grace hath much more abounded.

6. Yea, "the grace of God, which bringeth salvation," present salvation from inward and outward sin, hath abounded of late years in such a degree as neither we nor our fathers had known. How extensive is the change which has been wrought on the minds and lives of the people! Know ye not that the sound is gone forth into all the land; that there is scarce a city or considerable town to be found where some have not been roused out of

the sleep of death, and constrained to cry out, in the bitterness of their soul, "What must I do to be saved?" that this religious concern has spread to every age and sex; to most orders and degrees of men? to abundance of those, in particular, who, in time past, were accounted monsters of wickedness, "drinking in iniquity like water," and committing all "uncleanness with greediness."

7. In what age has such a work been wrought, considering the swiftness as well as the extent of it? When have such numbers of sinners in so short a time been recovered from the error of their ways? When hath religion, I will not say since the Reformation, but since the time of Constantine the Great, made so large a progress in any nation, within so small a space? I believe hardly can either ancient or modern history supply us with a parallel instance.

8. Let understanding men observe also the depth of the work so extensively and swiftly wrought. It is not a slight or superficial thing; but multitudes of men have been so thoroughly "convinced of sin" that their "bones were smitten asunder, as it were with a sword dividing the very joints and marrow." Many of these have been shortly after so filled with "peace and joy in believing" that, whether they were in the body or out of the body, they could scarcely tell. And in the power of this faith they have trampled under foot whatever the world accounts either terrible or desirable; having evidenced, in the severest trials, so fervent a love to God, so invariable and tender a good-will to mankind, particularly to their enemies, and such a measure of all the fruits of holiness, as were not unworthy the apostolic age. Now, so deep a repentance, so firm a faith, so fervent love and unblemished holiness, wrought in so many persons, within so short a time, the world has not seen for many ages.

9. No less remarkable is the purity of the religion which has extended itself so deeply and swiftly. I speak particularly with regard to the doctrines held by those among whom it so extended. Those of the Church of England, at least, must acknowledge this. For where is there a body of people in the realm who, number for number, so closely adhere to what our Church delivers as pure doctrine? Where are those who have approved and do approve themselves more orthodox, more sound in their opinions? Is there a Socinian or Arian among them all? Nay, were you to recite the whole catalogue of heresies enumerated by Bishop Pearson, it might be asked, Who can lay any one of these to their charge?

Nor is their religion more pure from heresy than it is from superstition. In former times, wherever an unusual concern for the things of God hath appeared on the one hand, strange and erroneous opinions continually sprung up with it; on the other, a zeal for things which were no part of religion, as though they had been essential branches of it. And many have laid as great, if not greater, stress on trifles, as on the weightier matters of the law. But it has not been so in the present case. No stress has been laid on any thing, as though it were necessary to salvation, but what is undeniably contained in the word of God. And of the things contained therein, the stress laid on each has been in proportion to the nearness of its relation to what is there laid down as the sum of all, the love of God and our neighbor. So pure from superstition, so thoroughly scriptural, is that religion which has lately spread in this nation!

10. It is likewise rational as well as scriptural; it is as pure from enthusiasm as from superstition. It is true, the contrary has been continually affirmed; but to affirm is one thing, to prove is another. Who will prove that it is enthusiasm to love God, even though we love him with all our heart? to rejoice in the sense of his love to us? to praise him even with all our strength? Who is able to make good this charge against the love of all mankind? or, laying rhetorical flourishes aside, to come close to the question, and demonstrate that it is enthusiasm in every state we are in therewith to be content? I do but just touch on the general heads. Ye men of reason, give me a man who, setting raillery and ill-names apart, will maintain this by dint of argument. If not, own this religion is the thing you seek—sober, manly, rational, divine; however exposed to the censure of those who are accustomed to revile what they understand not.

11. It may be farther observed, the religion of those we now speak of is entirely clear from bigotry. (Perhaps this might have been ranked with superstition, of which it seems to be only a particular species.) They are in nowise bigoted to opinions. They do, indeed, hold right opinions; but they are peculiarly cautious not to rest the weight of Christianity there. They have no such overgrown fondness for any opinions as to think those alone will make them Christians, or to confine their affection or esteem to those who agree with them therein. There is nothing they are more fearful of than this, lest it should steal upon them unawares. Nor are they bigoted to any particular branch even of practical religion. They desire, indeed, to be exact in every jot and tittle,

in the very smallest points of Christian practice. But they are not attached to one point more than another; they aim at uniform, universal obedience. They contend for nothing trifling, as if it were important; for nothing indifferent, as if it were necessary; for nothing circumstantial, as if it were essential to Christianity; but for every thing in its own order.

12. Above all, let it be observed that this religion has no mixture of vice or unholiness. It gives no man of any rank or profession the least license to sin. It makes no allowance to any person for ungodliness of any kind. Not that all who follow after have attained this, either are already perfect. But, however that be, they plead for no sin, either inward or outward. They condemn every kind and degree thereof, in themselves as well as in other men. Indeed, most in themselves; it being their constant care to bring those words home to their own case, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

13. Yet there is not found among them that bitter zeal in points, either of small or of great importance, that spirit of persecution which has so often accompanied the spirit of reformation. It is an idle conceit that the spirit of persecution is among the papists only: it is wheresoever the devil, that old murderer, works; and he still "worketh in" all "the children of disobedience." Of consequence, all the children of obedience will, on a thousand different pretenses, and in a thousand different ways, so far as God permits, persecute the children of God. But what is still more to be lamented is that the children of God themselves have so often used the same weapons, and persecuted others when the power was in their own hands.

Can we wholly excuse those venerable men, our great reformers themselves, from this charge? I fear not, if we impartially read over any history of the Reformation. What wonder is it, then, that, when the tables were turned, Bishop Bonner, or Gardiner, should make reprisals; that they should measure to others (indeed, good measure, shaken together) what had before been measured to them? Nor is it strange, when we consider the single case of Joan Bocher, that God should suffer those (otherwise) holy men, Archbishop Cranmer, Bishop Ridley, and Bishop Latimer, to drink of the same cup with her.

14. But can you find any tincture of this in the case before us? Do not all who have lately known the love of God know "what spirit they are of;" and that the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them? Do they approve of the using any

kind or degree of violence, on any account or pretense whatsoever, in matters of religion? Do they not hold the right every man has to judge for himself to be sacred and inviolable? Do they allow any method of bringing even those who are farthest out of the way, who are in the grossest errors, to the knowledge of the truth, except the methods of reason and persuasion; of love, patience, gentleness, long-suffering? Is there any thing in their practice which is inconsistent with this their constant profession? Do they in fact hinder their own relations or dependents from worshiping God according to their own conscience? When they believe them to be in error, do they use force of any kind, in order to bring them out of it? Let the instances, if there are such, be produced. But if no such are to be found, then let all reasonable men who believe the Bible own that a work of God is wrought in our land, and such a work (if we survey in one view the extent of it, the swiftness with which it has spread, the depth of that religion which was so swiftly diffused, and its purity from all corrupt mixtures) as, it must be acknowledged, cannot easily be paralleled, in all these concurrent circumstances, by any thing that is found in the English annals since Christianity was first planted in this island.

HOW MR. WESLEY BEGAN TO PREACH METHODISM.

I WAS ordained deacon in 1725 and priest in the year following. But it was many years after this before I was convinced of the great truths above recited. During all that time I was utterly ignorant of the nature and condition of justification. Sometimes I confounded it with sanctification (particularly when I was in Georgia); at other times I had some confused notion about the forgiveness of sins; but then I took it for granted the time of this must be either the hour of death or the day of judgment.

I was equally ignorant of the nature of saving faith; apprehending it to mean no more than a "firm assent to all the propositions contained in the Old and New Testaments."

As soon as, by the great blessing of God, I had a clearer view of these things I began to declare them to others also. "I believed, and therefore I spake." Wherever I was now desired to preach, salvation by faith was my only theme. My constant subjects were, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be

saved." "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins." These I explained and enforced with all my might, both in every church where I was asked to preach, and occasionally in the religious societies of London and Westminster; to some or other of which I was continually pressed to go by the stewards or other members of them.

Things were in this posture when I was told I must preach no more in this, and this, and another church; the reason was usually added without reserve, "Because you preach such doctrines." So much the more those who could not hear me there flocked together when I was at any of the societies; where I spoke, more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain.

But, after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in England which I had often done in a warmer climate; namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first at Bristol, where the society rooms were exceeding small, and at Kingswood, where we had no room at all; afterward, in or near London.

And I cannot say I have ever seen a more awful sight than when, on Rose Green, or the top of Hannam Mount, some thousands of people were calmly joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

They stood, and under open air adored
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.

And, whether they were listening to his word with attention still as night, or were lifting up their voice in praise as the sound of many waters, many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, "How dreadful is this place! This" also "is no other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!"

Be pleased to observe: (1) That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church (though not by any judicial sentence) "for preaching such doctrine." This was the open, avowed cause; there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, except that the people crowded so. (2) That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air till after this prohibition. (3) That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed which was to be supported thereby; nor had I any other end in

view than this—to save as many souls as I could. (4) Field preaching was therefore a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen; and therefore submitted to because I thought preaching even thus better than not preaching at all: First, in regard to my own soul, because, “a dispensation of the Gospel being committed to me,” I did not dare “not to preach the Gospel.” Secondly, in regard to the souls of others, whom I everywhere saw “seeking death in the error of their life.”

MR. WESLEY CHARGED WITH PREACHING MADNESS.

“BUT you drive them out of their senses. You make them mad.” Nay, then they are idle with a vengeance. This objection, therefore, being of the utmost importance, deserves our deepest consideration.

And, first, I grant, it is my earnest desire to drive all the world into what you probably call madness (I mean, inward religion); to make them just as mad as Paul when he was so accounted by Festus.

The counting all things on earth but dung and dross, so we may win Christ; the trampling under foot all the pleasures of the world; the seeking no treasure but in heaven; the having no desire of the praise of men, a good character, a fair reputation; the being exceeding glad when men revile us, and persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us falsely; the giving God thanks, when our father and mother forsake us, when we have neither food to eat, nor raiment to put on, nor a friend but what shoots out bitter words, nor a place where to lay our head: this is utter distraction in your account; but in God’s it is sober, rational religion; the genuine fruit, not of a distempered brain, not of a sickly imagination, but of the power of God in the heart, of victorious love, “and of a sound mind.”

I grant, secondly, it is my endeavor to drive all I can into what you may term another species of madness, which is usually preparatory to this, and which I term *repentance* or *conviction*.

I cannot describe this better than a writer of our own has done. I will therefore transcribe his words:

“When men feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, and behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart, and cannot but accuse themselves, and open their grief unto Almighty God, and call unto him for mercy. This being done seriously, their mind is so occupied, partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all desire of meat and drink is laid apart, and loathsomeness (or loathing) of all worldly things and pleasure cometh in place. So that nothing then liketh them more than to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behavior of body to show themselves weary of life.”

Now, what if your wife or daughter or acquaintance, after hearing one of these field preachers, should come and tell you that they saw damnation before them, and beheld with the eye of their mind the horror of hell? What if they should “tremble and quake,” and be so taken up, “partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, as to weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behavior to show themselves weary of life;” would you scruple to say that they were stark mad; that these fellows had driven them out of their senses; and that, whatever writer it was that talked at this rate, he was fitter for Bedlam than any other place?

You have overshot yourself now to some purpose. These are the very words of our own Church. You may read them, if you are so inclined, in the first part of the *Homily on Fasting*. And, consequently, what you have peremptorily determined to be mere lunacy and distraction is that “repentance unto life” which, in the judgment both of the Church and of St. Paul, is “never to be repented of.”

I grant, thirdly, that extraordinary circumstances have attended this conviction in some instances. A particular account of these I have frequently given. While the word of God was preached some persons have dropped down as dead; some have been, as it were, in strong convulsions; some roared aloud, though not with an articulate voice; and others spoke the anguish of their souls.

This, I suppose, you believe to be perfect madness. But it is easily accounted for, either on principles of reason or Scripture.

First. On principles of reason. For, how easy is it to suppose that a strong, lively, and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death should affect the body as well as the soul during the present laws of vital union, should interrupt or disturb the ordinary cir-

culations, and put nature out of its course! Yea, we may question whether, while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected in so violent a degree without some or other of those bodily symptoms following.

It is likewise easy to account for these things on principles of Scripture. For when we take a view of them in this light we are to add to the consideration of natural causes the agency of those spirits who still excel in strength, and, as far as they have leave from God, will not fail to torment whom they cannot destroy; to tear those that are coming to Christ. It is also remarkable that there is plain Scripture precedent of every symptom which has lately appeared. So that we cannot allow even the conviction attended with these to be madness without giving up both reason and Scripture.

I grant, fourthly, that touches of extravagance, bordering on madness, may sometimes attend severe conviction. And this also is easy to be accounted for by the present laws of the animal economy. For we know fear or grief, from a temporal cause, may occasion a fever, and thereby a delirium.

It is not strange, then, that some, while under strong impressions of grief or fear, from a sense of the wrath of God, should for a season forget almost all things else, and scarce be able to answer a common question; that some should fancy they see the flames of hell, or the devil and his angels, around them; or that others, for a space, should be "afraid," like Cain, "whosoever meeteth me will slay me." All these, and whatever less common effects may sometimes accompany this conviction, are easily known from the natural distemper of madness, were it only by this one circumstance, that whenever the person convinced tastes the pardoning love of God they all vanish away in a moment.

Lastly. I have seen one instance (I pray God I may see no more such!) of real, lasting madness.

Two or three years since I took one with me to Bristol who was under deep convictions, but of as sound an understanding in all respects as ever he had been in his life. I went a short journey, and, when I came to Bristol again, found him really distracted. I inquired particularly at what time and place, and in what manner, this disorder began. And I believe there are at least threescore witnesses alive and ready to testify what follows: When I went from Bristol he contracted an acquaintance with some persons who were not of the same judgment with me. He was soon prejudiced against me: quickly after, when our society

were met together in Kingswood House, he began a vehement invective both against my person and doctrines. In the midst of this he was struck raving mad. And so he continued till his friends put him into Bedlam; and probably laid his madness too to my charge.

I fear there may also be some instances of real madness, proceeding from a different cause.

Suppose, for instance, a person hearing me is strongly convinced that a liar cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. He comes home, and relates this to his parents or friends, and appears to be very uneasy. These good Christians are disturbed at this, and afraid he is running mad too. They are resolved he shall never hear any of those fellows more; and keep to it, in spite of all his entreaties. They will not suffer him, when at home, to be alone, for fear he should read or pray. And perhaps in a while they will constrain him, at least by repeated importunities, to do again the very thing for which he was convinced the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.

What is the event of this? Sometimes the Spirit of God is quenched and departs from him. Now you have carried the point. The man is easy as ever, and sins on without any remorse. But in other instances, where those convictions sink deep, and the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in the soul, you will drive the person into real, settled madness before you can quench the Spirit of God. I am afraid there have been several instances of this. You have forced the man's conscience till he is stark mad. But then pray do not impute that madness to me. Had you left him to my direction, or rather to the direction of the Spirit of God, he would have been filled with love and a sound mind. But you have taken the matter out of God's hand; and now you have brought it to a fair conclusion!

How frequent this case may be I know not. But doubtless most of those who make this objection, of our driving men mad, have never met with such an instance in their lives. The common cry is occasioned either by those who are convinced of sin or those who are inwardly converted to God; mere madness both (as was observed before), to those who are without God in the world. Yet I do not deny but you may have seen one in Bedlam who said he had followed me. But, observe, a madman's saying this is no proof of the fact; nay, and if he really had, it should be farther considered that his being in Bedlam is no sure proof of his being mad. Witness the well-known case of Mr.

Periam; and I doubt not more such are to be found. Yea, it is well if some have not been sent thither for no other reason but because they followed me; their kind relations either concluding that they must be distracted before they could do this, or perhaps hoping that Bedlam would make them mad, if it did not find them so.

And it must be owned a confinement of such a sort is as fit to cause as to cure distraction: for what scene of distress is to be compared to it? To be separated at once from all who are near and dear to you; to be cut off from all reasonable conversation; to be secluded from all business, from all reading, from every innocent entertainment of the mind, which is left to prey wholly upon itself, and day and night to pore over your misfortunes; to be shut up day by day in a gloomy cell, with only the walls to employ your heavy eyes, in the midst either of melancholy silence or horrid cries, groans, and laughter intermixed; to be forced by the main strength of those

Who laugh at human nature and compassion

to take drenches of nauseous, perhaps torturing medicines, which you know you have no need of now, but know not how soon you may, possibly by the operation of these very drugs on a weak and tender constitution: here is distress! It is an astonishing thing, a signal proof of the power of God, if any creature who has his senses when the confinement begins does not lose them before it is at an end!

How must it heighten the distress if such a poor wretch, being deeply convinced of sin, and growing worse and worse (as he probably will, seeing there is no medicine here for his sickness, no such physician as his case requires), be soon placed among the incurables! Can imagination itself paint such a hell upon earth? where even "hope never comes, that comes to all!" For, what remedy? If a man of sense and humanity should happen to visit that house of woe, would he give the hearing to a madman's tale? Or, if he did, would he credit it? "Do we not know," might he say, "how well any of these will talk in their lucid intervals?" So that a thousand to one he would concern himself no more about it, but leave the weary to wait for rest in the grave!

DECEMBER 22, 1744.

AN ACT OF DEVOTION.

BEHOLD the servant of the Lord!
 I wait thy guiding eye to feel,
 To hear and keep thine every word,
 To prove and do thy perfect will:
 Joyful from all my works to cease,
 Glad to fulfill all righteousness.

Me if thy grace vouchsafe to use,
 Meanest of all thy creatures me,
 The deed, the time, the manner choose;
 Let all my fruit be found of thee;
 Let all my works in thee be wrought,
 By thee to full perfection brought.

My every weak, though good design,
 O'errule, or change, as seems thee meet;
 Jesus, let all the work be thine;
 Thy work, O Lord, is all complete,
 And pleasing in thy Father's sight;
 Thou only hast done all things right.

Here, then, to thee thine own I leave,
 Mold as thou wilt the passive clay;
 But let me all thy stamp receive,
 But let me all thy words obey;
 Serve with a single heart and eye,
 And to thy glory live and die.

MAIN DOCTRINES OF METHODISM.

(*Written in 1746.*)

OUR main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three, that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself.

That repentance or conviction of sin which is always previous to faith (either in a higher or lower degree, as it pleases God), we describe in words to this effect:

"When men feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart, and cannot but accuse themselves, and open their grief unto Almighty God, and call unto him for mercy. This being done seriously, their mind is so occupied, partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that all desire of meat and drink is laid apart, and loathing of all worldly things and pleasure cometh in place. So that nothing then liketh them more than to weep, to lament, to mourn; and both with words and behavior of body to show themselves weary of life."

Now, permit me to ask, What if, before you had observed that these were the very words of our own Church, one of your acquaintance or parishioners had come and told you that ever since he heard a sermon at the Foundery he "saw damnation" before him, "and beheld with the eye of his mind the horror of hell?" What if he had "trembled and quaked," and been so taken up, "partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from the danger of hell and damnation," as to "weep, to lament, to mourn, and both with words and behavior to show himself weary of life?" Would you have

scrupled to say, "Here is another 'deplorable instance' of the 'Methodists driving men to distraction!' See 'into what excessive terrors, frights, doubts, and perplexities they throw weak and well-meaning men, quite oversetting their understandings and judgments, and making them liable to all these miseries.'"

I dare not refrain from adding one plain question, which I beseech you to answer, not to me, but to God: Have you ever experienced this repentance yourself? Did you ever "feel in yourself that heavy burden of sin?" of sin in general, more especially, inward sin; of pride, anger, lust, vanity? of (what is all sin in one) that carnal mind which is enmity, essential enmity, against God? Do you know by experience what it is to "behold with the eye of the mind the horror of hell?" Was "your mind" ever so "taken up, partly with sorrow and heaviness, partly with an earnest desire to be delivered from this danger of hell and damnation, that even all desire of meat and drink" was taken away, and you "loathed all worldly things and pleasure?" Surely, if you had known what it is to have the "arrows of the Almighty" thus "sticking fast in you," you could not so lightly have condemned those who now cry out, "The pains of hell come about me; the sorrows of death compass me, and the overflowings of ungodliness make me afraid."

Concerning the gate of religion (if it may be allowed so to speak), the true, Christian, saving faith, we believe it implies abundantly more than an assent to the truth of the Bible. "Even the devils believe that Christ was born of a virgin; that he wrought all kind of miracles; that for our sakes he suffered a most painful death to redeem us from death everlasting." These articles of our faith the very devils believe, and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testament. And yet, for all this faith, they be but devils; they remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith.

"The right and true Christian faith is not only to believe that the Holy Scriptures and the articles of our faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation, through Christ." Perhaps it may be expressed more clearly thus: "A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God."

For giving this account of Christian faith (as well as the preceding account of repentance, both which I have here also purposely described in the very terms of the Homilies), I have been

again and again, for near these eight years past, accused of enthusiasm; sometimes by those who spoke to my face, either in conversation, or from the pulpit; but more frequently by those who chose to speak in my absence; and not seldom from the press. I wait for those who judge this to be enthusiasm to bring forth their strong reasons. Till then, I must continue to account all these the "words of truth and soberness."

Religion itself (I choose to use the very words wherein I described it long ago) we define, "The loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves; and in that love abstaining from all evil, and doing all possible good to all men." The same meaning we have sometimes expressed a little more at large, thus: "Religion we conceive to be no other than love, the love of God and of all mankind; the loving God 'with all our heart, and soul, and strength,' as having 'first loved us,' as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

"This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is, there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God, and, at the same time, a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love and joy and peace; having its seat in the heart, in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits; continually springing forth, not only in all innocence (for love worketh no ill to his neighbor), but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it."

If this can be proved by Scripture or reason to be enthusiastic or erroneous doctrine, we will then plead guilty to the indictment of "teaching error and enthusiasm." But if this be the genuine religion of Christ, then will all who advance this charge against us be found false witnesses before God, in the day when he shall judge the earth.

AN EARNEST APPEAL TO MEN OF REASON AND RELIGION.

(Written in 1744.)

Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?—John vii, 51.

1. **ALTHOUGH** it is with us a "very small thing to be judged of you or of man's judgment," seeing we know God will "make our innocency as clear as the light, and our just dealing as the noon-day," yet are we ready to give any that are willing to hear a

plain account, both of our principles and actions, as having "renounced the hidden things of shame," and desiring nothing more "than by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

2. We see (and who does not?) the numberless follies and miseries of our fellow-creatures. We see on every side either men of no religion at all, or men of a lifeless, formal religion. We are grieved at the sight; and should greatly rejoice if, by any means, we might convince some that there is a better religion to be attained, a religion worthy of God that gave it. And this we conceive to be no other than love; the love of God and of all mankind; the loving God with all our heart and soul and strength as having first loved *us*, as the fountain of all the good we have received, and of all we ever hope to enjoy; and the loving every soul which God hath made, every man on earth, as our own soul.

3. This love we believe to be the medicine of life, the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for all the miseries and vices of men. Wherever this is there are virtue and happiness going hand in hand. There is humbleness of mind, gentleness, long-suffering, the whole image of God; and at the same time a peace that passeth all understanding, and joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind;
Each prayer accepted, and each wish resign'd;
Desires composed, affections ever even,
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heaven.

4. This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love and joy and peace, having its seat in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits, continually springing forth, not only in all innocence (for love worketh no ill to his neighbor), but likewise in every kind of beneficence, spreading virtue and happiness all around it.

5. This religion have we been following after for many years, as many know, if they would testify: but all this time, seeking wisdom, we found it not; we were spending our strength in vain. And, being now under full conviction of this, we declare it to all mankind; for we desire not that others should wander out of the way as we have done before them, but rather that they may profit by our loss, that they may go (though we did not, having then no man to guide us) the straight way to the religion of love, even by faith.

6. Now, faith (supposing the Scripture to be of God) is *πραγματων ελεγχος ου βλεπομενων*, "the demonstrative evidence of things unseen," the supernatural evidence of things invisible, not perceivable by eyes of flesh, or by any of our natural senses or faculties. Faith is that divine evidence whereby the spiritual man discerneth God, and the things of God. It is with regard to the spiritual world what sense is with regard to the natural. It is the spiritual sensation of every soul that is born of God.

7. Perhaps you have not considered it in this view. I will, then, explain it a little further.

Faith, according to the scriptural account, is the eye of the new-born soul. Hereby every true believer in God "seeth him who is invisible." Hereby (in a more particular manner, since life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel) he "seeth the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" and "beholdeth what manner of love it is which the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we," who are born of the Spirit, "should be called the sons of God."

It is the ear of the soul, whereby a sinner "hears the voice of the Son of God, and lives;" even that voice which alone wakes the dead, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee."

It is (if I may be allowed the expression) the palate of the soul; for hereby a believer "tastes the good word, and the powers of the world to come;" and "hereby he both tastes and sees that God is gracious," yea, "and merciful to him a sinner."

It is the feeling of the soul, whereby a believer perceives, through the "power of the highest overshadowing him," both the existence and the presence of Him in whom "he lives, moves, and has his being;" and indeed the whole invisible world, the entire system of things eternal. And hereby, in particular, he feels "the love of God shed abroad in his heart."

8. By this faith we are saved from all uneasiness of mind, from the anguish of a wounded spirit, from discontent, from fear and sorrow of heart, and from that inexpressible listlessness and weariness, both of the world and of ourselves, which we had so helplessly labored under for many years; especially when we were out of the hurry of the world, and sunk into calm reflection. In this we find that love of God, and of all mankind, which we had elsewhere sought in vain. This we know and feel, and therefore cannot but declare, saves every one that partakes of it, both from sin and misery, from every unhappy and every unholy temper.

Soft peace she brings, wherever she arrives ;
 She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives ;
 Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
 And opens in each breast a little heaven.

9. If you ask, "Why then have not all men this faith? all, at least, who conceive it to be so happy a thing? Why do they not believe immediately?"

We answer (on the Scripture hypothesis), "It is the gift of God." No man is able to work it in himself. It is a work of omnipotence. It requires no less power thus to quicken a dead soul than to raise a body that lies in the grave. It is a new creation, and none can create a soul anew but He who at first created the heavens and the earth.

10. May not your own experience teach you this? Can you give yourself this faith? Is it now in your power to see, or hear, or taste, or feel God? Have you already, or can you raise in yourself, any perception of God, or of an invisible world? I suppose you do not deny that there is an invisible world; you will not charge it in poor old Hesiod to Christian prejudice of education, when he says, in those well-known words:

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, whether we wake, or if we sleep."

Now, is there any power in your soul whereby you discern either these or Him that created them? Or, can all your wisdom and strength open an intercourse between yourself and the world of spirits? Is it in your power to burst the veil that is on your heart, and let in the light of eternity? You know it is not. You not only do not, but cannot, by your own strength, thus believe. The more you labor so to do, the more you will be convinced "it is the gift of God."

11. It is the free gift of God, which he bestows, not on those who are worthy of his favor, not on such as are previously holy, and so fit to be crowned with all the blessings of his goodness, but on the ungodly and unholy; on those who till that hour were fit only for everlasting destruction; those in whom was no good thing, and whose only plea was, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" No merit, no goodness in man precedes the forgiving love of God. His pardoning mercy supposes nothing in us but a sense of mere sin and misery; and to all who see and feel and own their wants, and their utter inability to remove them, God freely gives faith, for the sake of Him in whom he is always "well pleased."

12. This is a short, rude sketch of the doctrine we teach. These are our fundamental principles; and we spend our lives in confirming others herein, and in a behavior suitable to them.

Now, if you are a reasonable man, although you do not believe the Christian system to be of God, lay your hand upon your breast, and calmly consider what it is that you can here condemn. What evil have we done to *you*, that you should join the common cry against us? Why should *you* say, "Away with such fellows from the earth; it is not fit that they should live?"

13. It is true, your judgment does not fall in with ours. We believe the Scripture to be of God. This you do not believe. And how do you defend yourselves against them who urge you with the guilt of unbelief? Do you not say, "Every man *must* judge according to the light he has," and that "if he be true to this he ought not to be condemned?" Keep then to this, and turn the tables. *Must* not *we* also judge according to the light we have? You can in no wise condemn us without involving yourselves in the same condemnation. According to the light *we* have we cannot but believe the Scripture is of God; and while we believe this we dare not turn aside from it, to the right hand or to the left.

14. Let us consider this point a little further. You yourself believe there is a God. You have the witness of this in your own breast. Perhaps sometimes you tremble before him. You believe there is such a thing as right and wrong; that there is a difference between moral good and evil. Of consequence, you must allow there is such a thing as conscience. I mean that every person capable of reflection is conscious to himself, when he looks back on any thing he has done, whether it be good or evil. You must likewise allow that every man is to be guided by his own conscience, not another's. Thus far, doubtless, you may go, without any danger of being a volunteer in faith.

15. Now, then, be consistent with yourself. If there be a God who, being just and good (attributes inseparable from the very idea of God), is "a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," ought we not to do whatever we believe will be acceptable to so good a Master? Observe: if we believe, if we are fully persuaded of this in our mind, ought we not thus to seek him, and that with all diligence? Else, how should we expect any reward at his hands?

16. Again: ought we not to do what we believe is morally good, and to abstain from what we judge is evil? By good I

mean conducive to the good of mankind, tending to advance peace and good-will among men, promotive of the happiness of our fellow-creatures; and by evil, what is contrary thereto. Then surely you cannot condemn our endeavoring, after our power, to make mankind happy (I now speak only with regard to the present world); our striving as we can to lessen their sorrows, and to teach them in whatsoever state they are therewith to be content.

17. Yet again: are we to be guided by our own conscience, or by that of other men? You surely will not say that any man's conscience can preclude mine. You, at least, will not plead for robbing us of what you so strongly claim for yourselves: I mean the right of private judgment, which is indeed unalienable from reasonable creatures. You well know that, unless we faithfully follow the dictates of our own mind, we cannot have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man.

18. Upon your own principles, therefore, you must allow us to be, at least, innocent. Do you find any difficulty in this? You speak much of prepossession and prejudice; beware you are not entangled therein yourselves! Are you not prejudiced against us because we believe and strenuously defend that system of doctrines which you oppose? Are you not enemies to us because you take it for granted we are so to you? Nay, God forbid! I once saw one who, from a plentiful fortune, was reduced to the lowest extremity. He was lying on a sick bed, in violent pain, without even convenient food, or one friend to comfort him, so that, when his merciful landlord, to complete all, sent one to take his bed from under him, I was not surprised at his attempt to put an end to so miserable a life. Now, when I saw that poor man weltering in his blood could I be angry at him? Surely, no. No more can I at you. I can no more hate than I can envy you. I can only lift up my heart to God for you (as I did then for him), and, with silent tears, beseech the Father of mercies that he would look on you in your blood, and say unto you, "Live."

19. "Sir," said that unhappy man, at my first interview with him, "I scorn to deceive you or any man. You must not tell me of your Bible; for I do not believe one word of it. I know there is a God; and believe he is all in all, the *Anima mundi* (the soul of the world), the

Totam

Mens agitans molem, et magno se corpore miscens.

(The all-informing soul,

Which spreads through the vast mass, and moves the whole.)

But further than this I believe not : all is dark; my thought is lost. But I hear," added he, "you preach to a great number of people every night and morning. Pray, what would you do with them? Whither would you lead them? What religion do you preach? What is it good for?" I replied, "I do preach to as many as desire to hear, every night and morning. You ask what I would do with them? I would make them virtuous and happy, easy in themselves, and useful to others. Whither would I lead them? To heaven; to God the Judge, the lover of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. What religion do I preach? The religion of love; the law of kindness brought to light by the Gospel. What is this good for? To make all who receive it enjoy God and themselves: to make them like God; lovers of all; contented in their lives; and crying out at their death, in calm assurance, 'O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'"

20. Will you object to such a religion as this that it is not reasonable? Is it not reasonable then to love God? Hath he not given you life and breath and all things? Does he not continue his love to you, filling your heart with food and gladness? What have you which you have not received of him? And does not love demand a return of love? Whether, therefore, you do love God or no, you cannot but own it is reasonable so to do; nay, seeing he is the Parent of all good, to love him with all your heart.

21. Is it not reasonable also to love our neighbor, every man whom God hath made? Are we not brethren, the children of one Father? Ought we not, then, to love one another? And should we only love them that love us? Is that acting like our Father which is in heaven? He causeth his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. And can there be a more equitable rule than this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" You will plead for the reasonableness of this; as also for that golden rule (the only adequate measure of brotherly love in all our words and actions), "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them?"

22. Is it not reasonable then that, as we have opportunity, we should do good unto all men; not only friends, but enemies; not only to the deserving, but likewise to the evil and unthankful? Is it not right that all our life should be one continued labor of

love? If a day passes without doing good, may one not well say, with Titus, *Amici, diem perdidit!* (My friends, I have lost a day!) And is it enough to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit those who are sick or in prison? Should we have no pity for those

Who sigh beneath guilt's horrid stain,
The worst confinement, and the heaviest chain?

Should we shut up our compassion toward those who are of all men most miserable, because they are miserable by their own fault? If we have found a medicine to heal even that sickness, should we not, as we have freely received it, freely give? Should we not pluck them as brands out of the fire? the fire of lust, anger, malice, revenge? Your inmost soul answers, "It should be done; it is reasonable in the highest degree." Well, this is the sum of our preaching, and of our lives, our enemies themselves being the judges. If therefore you allow that it is reasonable to love God, to love mankind, and to do good to all men, you cannot but allow that religion which we preach and live to be agreeable to the highest reason.

23. Perhaps all this you can bear. It is tolerable enough; and if we spoke only of being saved by love, you should have no great objection: but you do not comprehend what we say of being saved by faith. I know you do not. You do not in any degree comprehend what we mean by that expression: have patience, then, and I will tell you yet again. By those words, "We are saved by faith," we mean that the moment a man receives that faith which is above described he is saved from doubt and fear, and sorrow of heart, by a peace that passeth all understanding; from the heaviness of a wounded spirit, by joy unspeakable; and from his sins, of whatsoever kind they were, from his vicious desires, as well as words and actions, by the love of God, and of all mankind, then shed abroad in his heart.

24. We grant nothing is more unreasonable than to imagine that such mighty effects as these can be wrought by that poor, empty, insignificant thing which the world calls faith, and you among them. But supposing there be such a faith on the earth as that which the apostle speaks of, such an intercourse between God and the soul, what is too hard for such a faith? You yourselves may conceive that "all things are possible to him that" thus "believeth;" to him that thus "walks with God," that is now a citizen of heaven, an inhabitant of eternity. If, therefore, you will contend with us you must change the ground of your

attack. You must flatly deny there is any faith upon earth; but perhaps this you might think too large a step. You cannot do this without a secret condemnation in your own breast. O, that you would at length cry to God for that heavenly gift, whereby alone this truly reasonable religion, this beneficent love of God and man, can be planted in your heart.

25. If you say, "But those that profess this faith are the most unreasonable of all men," I ask, Who are those that profess this faith? Perhaps you do not personally know such a man in the world. Who are they that so much as profess to have this "evidence of things not seen?" that profess to "see Him that is invisible," to hear the voice of God, and to have his Spirit ever "witnessing with their spirits that they are the children of God?" I fear you will find few that even profess this faith among the large numbers of those who are called believers.

26. "However, there are enough that profess themselves Christians." Yea, too many, God knoweth; too many that confute their vain professions by the whole tenor of their lives. I will allow all you can say on this head, and perhaps more than all. It is now some years since I was engaged unawares in a conversation with a strong reasoner, who at first urged the wickedness of the American Indians as a bar to our hope of converting them to Christianity. But when I mentioned their temperance, justice, and veracity (according to the accounts I had then received) it was asked, "Why, if those heathens are such men as these, what will they gain by being made Christians? What would they gain by being such Christians as we see every-where round about us?" I could not deny they would lose, not gain, by such a Christianity as this. Upon which she added, "Why, what else do you mean by Christianity?" My plain answer was, "What do you apprehend to be more valuable than good sense, good nature, and good manners? All these are contained, and that in the highest degree, in what I mean by Christianity. Good sense (so called) is but a poor, dim shadow of what Christians call faith. Good nature is only a faint, distant resemblance of Christian charity. And good manners, if of the most finished kind that nature, assisted by art, can attain to, is but a dead picture of that holiness of conversation which is the image of God visibly expressed. All these, put together by the art of God, I call Christianity." "Sir, if this be Christianity," said my opponent, in amaze, "I never saw a Christian in my life."

27. Perhaps it is the same case with *you*. If so, I am grieved

for you, and can only wish, till you do see a living proof of this, that you would not say you see a Christian. For this is scriptural Christianity, and this alone. Whenever, therefore, you see an unreasonable man, you see one who perhaps calls himself by that name, but is no more a Christian than he is an angel. So far as he departs from true, genuine reason, so far he departs from Christianity. Do not say, "This is only asserted, not proved." It is undeniably proved by the original charter of Christianity. We appeal to this, to the written word. If any man's temper or words or actions are contradictory to right reason, it is evident, to a demonstration, they are contradictory to this. Produce any possible or conceivable instance and you will find the fact is so. The lives, therefore, of those who are *called* Christians is no just objection to Christianity.

28. We join with you then in desiring a religion founded on reason, and every way agreeable thereto. But one question still remains to be asked, What do you mean by *reason*? I suppose you mean the eternal reason, or the nature of things; the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them. Why, this is the very religion *we* preach; a religion evidently founded on, and every way agreeable to, eternal reason, to the essential nature of things. Its foundation stands on the nature of God and the nature of man, together with their mutual relations. And it is every way suitable thereto; to the nature of God; for it begins in knowing him: and where, but in the true knowledge of God, can you conceive true religion to begin? It goes on in loving him and all mankind; for you cannot but imitate whom you love. It ends in serving him, in doing his will, in obeying him whom we know and love.

29. It is every way suited to the nature of man; for it begins in a man's knowing himself; knowing himself to be what he really is—foolish, vicious, miserable. It goes on to point out the remedy for this, to make him truly wise, virtuous, and happy, as every thinking mind (perhaps from some implicit remembrance of what it originally was) longs to be. It finishes all by restoring the due relations between God and man; by uniting forever the tender Father and the grateful, obedient son; the great Lord of all and the faithful servant; doing not his own will, but the will of him that sent him.

30. But perhaps by reason you mean the faculty of reasoning, of inferring one thing from another. There are many, it is confessed (particularly those who are styled Mystic divines), that

utterly decry the use of reason, thus understood, in religion; nay, that condemn all reasoning concerning the things of God, as utterly destructive of true religion.

But we can in no wise agree with this. We find no authority for it in holy writ. So far from it that we find there both our Lord and his apostles continually reasoning with their opposers. Neither do we know, in all the productions of ancient and modern times, such a chain of reasoning or argumentation so close, so solid, so regularly connected as the Epistle to the Hebrews. And the strongest reasoner whom we have ever observed (excepting only Jesus of Nazareth) was that Paul of Tarsus; the same who has left that plain direction for all Christians: "In malice," or wickedness, "be ye children; but in understanding," or reason, "be ye men."

31. We therefore not only allow, but earnestly exhort, all who seek after true religion to use all the reason which God hath given them in searching out the things of God. But your reasoning justly, not only on this, but on any subject whatsoever, presupposes true judgments already formed, whereon to ground your argumentation. Else, you know, you will stumble at every step; because *ex falso non sequitur verum*, "it is impossible, if your premises are false, to infer from them true conclusions."

32. You know, likewise, that before it is possible for you to form a true judgment of them, it is absolutely necessary that you have a clear apprehension of the things of God, and that your ideas thereof be all fixed, distinct, and determinate. And seeing our ideas are not innate, but must all originally come from our senses, it is certainly necessary that you have senses capable of discerning objects of this kind: not those only which are called natural senses, which in this respect profit nothing, as being altogether incapable of discerning objects of a spiritual kind; but spiritual senses exercised to discern spiritual good and evil. It is necessary that you have *the hearing ear* and *the seeing eye*, emphatically so called; that you have a new class of senses opened in your soul, not depending on organs of flesh and blood, to be "the evidence of things not seen," as your bodily senses are of visible things; to be the avenues to the invisible world, to discern spiritual objects, and to furnish you with ideas of what the outward "eye hath not seen, neither the ear heard."

33. And till you have these internal senses, till the eyes of your understanding are opened, you can have no apprehension of divine things, no idea of them at all. Nor, consequently, till then can

you either judge truly or reason justly concerning them; seeing your reason has no ground whereon to stand, no materials to work upon.

34. To use the trite instance: as you cannot reason concerning colors, if you have no natural sight, because all the ideas received by your other senses are of a different kind; so that neither your hearing, nor any other sense, can supply your want of sight, or furnish your reason in this respect with matter to work upon: so you cannot reason concerning spiritual things if you have no spiritual sight, because all your ideas received by your outward senses are of a different kind; yea, far more different from those received by faith or internal sensation than the idea of color from that of sound. These are only different species of one genus, namely, sensible ideas received by external sensation; whereas, the ideas of faith differ *toto genere* [entirely] from those of external sensation. So that it is not conceivable that external sensation should supply the want of internal senses, or furnish your reason in this respect with matter to work upon.

35. What, then, will your reason do here? How will it pass from things natural to spiritual; from the things that are seen to those that are not seen; from the visible to the invisible world? What a gulf is here! By what art will reason get over the immense chasm? This cannot be till the Almighty come in to your succor, and give you that faith you have hitherto despised. Then, upborne, as it were, on eagles' wings, you shall soar away into the regions of eternity; and your enlightened reason shall explore even "the deep things of God;" God himself "revealing them to you by his Spirit."

36. I expected to have received much light on this head from a treatise lately published and earnestly recommended to me—I mean *Christianity not Founded on Argument*. But, on a careful perusal of that piece, notwithstanding my prejudice in its favor, I could not but perceive that the great design uniformly pursued throughout the work was to render the whole of the Christian institution both odious and contemptible. In order to this the author gleans up with great care and diligence the most plausible of those many objections that have been raised against it by late writers, and proposes them with the utmost strength of which he was capable. To do this with the more effect he personates a Christian: he makes a show of defending an avowed doctrine of Christianity, namely, the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God; and often, for several sentences together (indeed, in the

beginning of almost every paragraph), speaks so like a Christian that not a few have received him according to his wish. Meanwhile, with all possible art and show of reason, and in the most labored language, he pursues his point throughout, which is to prove that "Christianity is contrary to reason;" or, that "no man acting according to the principles of reason can possibly be a Christian."

37. It is a wonderful proof of the power that smooth words may have even on serious minds that so many have mistaken such a writer as this for a friend of Christianity, since almost every page of his tract is filled with gross falsehood and broad blasphemy; and these supported by such exploded fallacies and commonplace sophistry that a person of two or three years' standing in the university might give them a sufficient answer, and make the author appear as irrational and contemptible as he labors to make Christ and his apostles.

38. I have hitherto spoken to those chiefly who do not receive the Christian system as of God. I would add a few words to another sort of men—though not so much with regard to our principles or practice as with regard to their own: to you who do receive it, who believe the Scripture, but yet do not take upon you the character of religious men. I am therefore obliged to address myself to you likewise under the character of men of reason.

39. I would only ask, Are you such, indeed? Do you answer the character under which you appear? If so, you are consistent with yourselves; your principles and practice agree together.

Let us try whether this is so or not. Do you not take the name of God in vain? Do you remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy? Do you not speak evil of the ruler of your people? Are you not a drunkard, or a glutton, faring as sumptuously as you can every day; making a god of your belly? Do you not avenge yourself? Are you not a whoremonger or adulterer? Answer plainly to your own heart, before God the judge of all.

Why, then, do you say you believe the Scripture? If the Scripture is true, you are lost. You are in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Your damnation slumbereth not. You are heaping up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Doubtless, if the Scripture is true, and you remain thus, it had been good for you if you had never been born.

40. How is it that you call yourselves men of reason? Is reason inconsistent with itself? You are the furthest of all men under the sun from any pretense to that character. A common swearer, a Sabbath breaker, a whoremonger, a drunkard, who says he believes the Scripture is of God, is a monster upon earth, the greatest contradiction to his own as well as to the reason of all mankind. In the name of God (that worthy name whereby you are called, and which you daily cause to be blasphemed), turn either to the right hand or to the left. Either profess you are an infidel or be a Christian. Halt no longer thus between two opinions. Either cast off the Bible or your sins. And, in the meantime, if you have any spark of your boasted reason left, do not "count us your enemies" (as I fear you have done hitherto, and as thousands do wherever we have declared, "They who do such things shall not inherit eternal life"), "because we tell you the truth;" seeing these are not our words, but the words of Him that sent us; yea, though, in doing this, we use "great plainness of speech," as becomes the ministry we have received. "For we are not as many who corrupt" (cauponize, soften, and thereby adulterate) "the word of God. But as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."

41. But, it may be, you are none of these. You abstain from all such things. You have an unspotted reputation. You are a man of honor, or a woman of virtue. You scorn to do an unhand-some thing, and are of an unblamable life and conversation. You are harmless (if I understand you right) and useless from morning to night. You do no hurt and no good to any one, no more than a straw floating upon the water. Your life glides smoothly on from year to year; and from one season to another, having no occasion to work,

You waste away in gentle inactivity the day.

42. I will not now shock the easiness of your temper by talking about a future state; but suffer me to ask you a question about present things: Are you now happy?

I have seen a large company of reasonable creatures, called Indians, sitting in a row on the side of a river, looking sometimes at one another, sometimes at the sky, and sometimes at the bubbles on the water. And so they sat (unless in the time of war), for a great part of the year, from morning to night.

These were, doubtless, much at ease. But can you think they were happy? And how little happier are you than they?

43. You eat and drink and sleep and dress and dance and

sit down to play. You are carried abroad. You are at the masquerade, the theater, the opera-house, the park, the levee, the drawing-room. What do you do there? Why, sometimes you talk; sometimes you look at one another. And what are you to do to-morrow, the next day, the next week, the next year? You are to eat and drink and sleep and dance and dress and play again. And you are to be carried abroad again, that you may again look at one another! And is this all? Alas, how little more happiness have you in this than the Indians in looking at the sky or water!

Ah, poor, dull round! I do not wonder that Colonel M—— (or any man of reflection) should prefer death itself, even in the midst of his years, to such a life as this; and should frankly declare that he chose to go out of the world because he found nothing in it worth living for.

44. Yet it is certain there is business to be done: and many we find in all places (not to speak of the vulgar, the drudges of the earth) who are continually employed therein. Are you of that number? Are you engaged in trade or some other reputable employment? I suppose profitable, too; for you would not spend your time and labor and thought for nothing. You are then making your fortune; you are getting money. True; but money is not your ultimate end. The treasuring up gold and silver for its own sake, all men own, is as foolish and absurd, as grossly unreasonable, as the treasuring up spiders or the wings of butterflies. You consider this but as a means to some further end. And what is that? Why, the enjoying yourself, the being at ease, the taking your pleasure, the living like a gentleman; that is, plainly, either the whole or some part of the happiness above described.

Supposing then your end to be actually attained; suppose you have your wish before you drop into eternity: go and sit down with Thleeanowhee and his companions on the river-side. After you have toiled for fifty years you are just as happy as they.

45. Are you, can you, or any reasonable man, be satisfied with this? You are not. It is not possible you should. But what else can you do? You would have something better to employ your time; but you know not where to find it upon earth.

And, indeed, it is obvious that the earth, as it is now constituted, even with the help of all European arts, does not afford sufficient employment to take up half the waking hours of half its inhabitants.

What, then, can you do? How can you employ the time that

lies so heavy upon your hands? This very thing which you seek declare we unto you. The thing you want is the religion we preach. That alone leaves no time upon our hands. It fills up all the blank spaces of life. It exactly takes up all the time we have to spare, be it more or less; so that "he that hath much hath nothing over; and he that has little has no lack."

46. Once more: Can you, or any man of reason, think you were made for the life you now lead? You cannot possibly think so; at least, not till you tread the Bible under foot. The oracles of God bear thee witness in every page (and thine own heart agreeth thereto) that thou wast made in the image of God, an incorruptible picture of the God of glory. And what art thou even in thy present state? An everlasting spirit going to God. For what end then did he create thee, but to dwell with him above this perishable world, to know him, to love him, to do his will, to enjoy him for ever and ever? O, look more deeply into thyself! and into that Scripture, which thou professest to receive as the word of God, as "right concerning all things." There thou wilt find a nobler, happier state described than it ever yet entered into thy heart to conceive. But God hath now revealed it to all those who "rejoice evermore, and pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks," and do his "will on earth as it is done in heaven." For this thou wast made. Hereunto also thou art called. O, be not disobedient to the heavenly calling! At least, be not angry with those who would fain bring thee to be a living witness of that religion "whose ways are" indeed "ways of pleasantness and all her paths peace."

47. Do you say in your heart, "I know all this already. I am not barely a man of reason. I am a religious man; for I not only avoid evil and do good, but use all the means of grace. I am constantly at church and at the sacrament, too. I say my prayers every day. I read many good books. I fast every thirtieth of January and Good-Friday?" Do you, indeed? Do you do all this? This you may do, you may go thus far, and yet have no religion at all; no such religion as avails before God: nay, much further than this, than you have ever gone yet, or so much as thought of going. For you may "give all your goods to feed the poor," yea, "your body to be burned," and yet very possibly, if St. Paul be a judge, "have no charity," no true religion.

48. This religion, which alone is of value before God, is the very thing you want. You want (and in wanting this you want

all) the religion of love. You do not love your neighbor as yourself, no more than you love God with all your heart. Ask your own heart now if it be not so. It is plain you do not love God. If you did you would be happy in him. But you know you are not happy. Your formal religion no more makes you happy than your neighbor's gay religion does him. O, how much have you suffered for want of plain dealing! Can you now bear to hear the naked truth? You have "the form of godliness, but not the power." You are a mere whited wall. Before the Lord your God I ask you, Are you not? Too sure; for your "inward parts are very wickedness." You love "the creature more than the Creator." You are "a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God." *A lover of God!* You do not love God at all, no more than you love a stone. You love the world; therefore, the love of the Father is not in you.

49. You are on the brink of the pit, ready to be plunged into everlasting perdition. Indeed, you have a zeal for God; but not according to knowledge. O, how terribly have you been deceived! posting to hell, and fancying it was heaven. See, at length, that outward religion, without inward, is nothing; is far worse than nothing, being, indeed, no other than a solemn mockery of God. And inward religion you have not. You have not the faith "that worketh by love." Your faith (so called) is no living, saving principle. It is not the apostle's faith, "the substance," or subsistence, "of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." So far from it that this faith is the very thing which you call enthusiasm. You are not content with being without it, unless you blaspheme it, too. You even revile that "life which is hid with Christ in God;" all seeing, tasting, hearing, feeling God. These things are foolishness unto you. No marvel; "for they are spiritually discerned."

50. O, no longer shut your eyes against the light! Know you have a name; that you live, but are dead. Your soul is utterly dead in sin, dead in pride, in vanity, in self-will, in sensuality, in love of the world. You are utterly dead to God. There is no intercourse between your soul and God. "You have neither seen him" (by faith, as our Lord witnessed against them of old time), "nor heard his voice at any time." You have no spiritual "senses exercised to discern spiritual good and evil." You are angry at infidels, and are all the while as mere an infidel before God as they. You have "eyes that see not, and ears that hear not." You have a callous, unfeeling heart.

51. Bear with me a little longer; my soul is distressed for you. "The God of this world hath blinded your eyes," and you are "seeking death in the error of your life." Because you do not commit gross sin, because you give alms, and go to the church and sacrament, you imagine that you are serving God; yet, in very deed, you are serving the devil; for you are doing still your own will, not the will of God your Saviour. You are pleasing yourself in all you do. Pride, vanity, and self-will (the genuine fruits of an earthly, sensual, devilish heart) pollute all your words and actions. You are in darkness, in the shadow of death. O, that God would say to you in thunder, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!"

52. But, blessed be God, he hath not yet left himself without witness:

All are not lost! there be who faith prefer,
Though few, and piety to God!

who know the power of faith, and are no strangers to that inward, vital religion, "the mind that was in Christ; righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Of you who "have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," I would be glad to learn if we have "erred from the faith," or walked contrary to "the truth as it is in Jesus." "Let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me," if haply that which is amiss may be done away, and what is wanting supplied, till we all come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

53. Perhaps the first thing that now occurs to your mind relates to the doctrine which we teach. You have heard that we say, "Men may live without sin." And have you not heard that the Scripture says the same—we mean without committing sin. Does not St. Paul say plainly that those who believe "do not continue in sin," that they cannot "live any longer therein?" (Rom. vi, 1, 2.) Does not St. Peter say, "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live to the lusts of men, but to the will of God?" (1 Pet. iv, 1, 2.) And does not St. John say expressly, "He that committeth sin is of the devil! For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John iii, 8, etc.). And again, "We know that whatsoever is born of God sinneth not" (1 John v, 18).

54. You see, then, it is not we that say this, but the Lord.

These are not our words, but his. And who is he that replieth against God? Who is able to make God a liar? Surely, he will be justified in his saying, and clear when he is judged! Can you deny it? Have you not often felt a secret check when you were contradicting this great truth? And how often have you wished for what you were taught to deny? Nay, can you help wishing for it this moment? Do you not now earnestly desire to cease from sin? to commit it no more? Does not your soul pant after this glorious liberty of the sons of God? And what strong reason have you to expect it? Have you not had a foretaste of it already? Do you not remember the time when God first lifted up the light of his countenance upon you? Can it ever be forgotten? the day when the candle of the Lord first shone upon your head!

Butter and honey did you eat;
And, lifted up on high,
You saw the clouds beneath your feet,
And rode upon the sky.

Far, far above all earthly things
Triumphantly you rode;
You soar'd to heaven on eagles' wings,
And found, and talk'd with God.

You then had power not to commit sin. You found the apostle's words strictly true, "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." But those whom you took to be experienced Christians, telling you this was only the time of your espousals, this could not last always, you must come down from the mount, and the like, shook your faith. You looked at men more than God, and so became weak, and like another man. Whereas, had you then had any to guide you according to the truth of God, had you then heard the doctrine which now you blame, you had never fallen from your steadfastness; but had found that, in this sense also, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

55. Have you not another objection nearly allied to this, namely, that we preach perfection? True; but what perfection? The term you cannot object to, because it is scriptural. All the difficulty is to fix the meaning of it according to the word of God. And this we have done again and again, declaring to all the world that Christian perfection does not imply an exemption from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations; but that it does imply the being so crucified with Christ as to be able to testify, "I live not, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20), and hath "purified my heart by faith" (Acts xv, 9). It does imply "the casting down every high thing that exalteth itself against

the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." It does imply "the being holy, as he that hath called us is holy, in all manner of conversation (2 Cor. x, 5; 1 Pet. i, 15); and, in a word, "the loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and serving him with all our strength."

56. Now, is it possible for any who believe the Scripture to deny one tittle of this? You cannot. You dare not. You would not for the world. You know it is the pure word of God. And this is the whole of what we preach; this is the height and depth of what we (with St. Paul) call perfection—a state of soul devoutly to be wished by all who have tasted of the love of God. O, pray for it without ceasing! It is the one thing you want. Come with holiness to the throne of grace, and be assured that when you ask this of God you shall have the petition you ask of him. We know, indeed, that to man, to the natural man, this is impossible. But we know also, that as no word is impossible with God, so "all things are possible to him that believeth."

57. For "we are saved by faith." But have you not heard this urged as another objection against us, that we preach salvation by faith alone? And does not St. Paul do the same thing? "By grace," saith he, "ye are saved through faith." Can any words be more express? And, elsewhere, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi, 31).

What we mean by this (if it has not been sufficiently explained already) is that we are saved from our sins only by a confidence in the love of God. As soon as we "behold what manner of love it is which the Father hath bestowed upon us, we love him" (as the apostle observes) "because he first loved us." And then is that commandment written in our heart, "That he who loveth God love his brother also;" from which love of God and man meekness, humbleness of mind, and all holy tempers spring. Now, these are the very essence of salvation, of Christian salvation, salvation from sin; and from these outward salvation flows—that is, holiness of life and conversation. Well, and are not these things so? If you know in whom you have believed you need no further witnesses.

58. But perhaps you doubt whether that faith whereby we are thus saved implies such a trust and confidence in God as we describe. You cannot think faith implies assurance—an assurance of the love of God to our souls of his being now reconciled to us, and having forgiven all our sins. And this we freely confess, that, if number of voices is to decide the question, we must give

it up at once; for you have on your side not only some who desire to be Christians indeed, but all nominal Christians in every place, and the Romish Church, one and all. Nay, these last are so vehement in your defense that, in the famed Council of Trent, they have decreed, "If any man hold (*fiduciam*) trust, confidence, or assurance of pardon to be essential to faith, let him be accursed."

59. Thus does that council anathematize the Church of England; for she is convicted hereof by her own confession. The very words in the Homily on Salvation are, "Even the devils believe that Christ was born of a virgin; that he wrought all kinds of miracles, declaring himself very God; that for our sakes he suffered a most painful death to redeem us from death everlasting. These articles of our faith the devils believe; and so they believe all that is written in the Old and New Testaments. And yet for all this faith they be but devils. They remain still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith."

"The right and true Christian faith is not only to believe the holy Scriptures and the articles of our faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation through Christ." Or (as it is expressed a little after), "a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God."

60. Indeed, the Bishop of Rome saith, "If any man hold this let him be Anathema Maranatha." But, it is to be hoped, papal anathemas do not move *you*. You are a member of the Church of England. Are you? Then the controversy is at end. Then hear the Church: "Faith is a sure trust which a man hath in God, that his sins are forgiven." Or, if you are not, whether you hear our Church or no, at least hear the Scriptures. Hear, believing Job, declaring his faith, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Hear Thomas (when having seen he believed) crying out, "My Lord and my God!" Hear St. Paul clearly describing the nature of his faith, "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Hear (to mention no more) all the believers who were with Paul when he wrote to the Colossians, bearing witness, "We give thanks unto the Father, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. i, 12, 13, 14).

61. But what need have we of distant witnesses? You have a witness in your own breast. For am I not speaking to one that loves God? How came you, then, to love him at first? Was it not because you knew that he loved you? Did you, could you, love God at all till you tasted and saw that he was gracious; that he was merciful to you a sinner? What avails, then, controversy or strife of words? Out of thy own mouth! You own you had no love to God till you were sensible of his love to you. And, whatever expressions any sinner who loves God uses to denote God's love to him, you will always on examination find that they directly or indirectly imply forgiveness. Pardoning love is still at the root of all. He who was offended is now reconciled. The new song which God puts in every mouth is always to that effect: "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away. Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isa. xii, 1, 2).

62. A confidence, then, in a pardoning God is essential to saving faith. The forgiveness of sins is one of the first of those unseen things whereof faith is the evidence. And if you are sensible of this will you quarrel with us concerning an indifferent circumstance of it? Will you think it an important objection that we assert that this faith is usually given in a moment? First, let me entreat you to read over that authentic account of God's dealings with men, the Acts of the Apostles. In this treatise you will find how he wrought from the beginning on those who received remissions of sins by faith. And can you find one of these (except, perhaps, St. Paul) who did not receive it in a moment? But abundance you find of those who did, besides Cornelius and the three thousand (Acts ii, 41). And to this also agrees the experience of those who now receive the heavenly gift. Three or four exceptions only have I found in the course of several years—perhaps you yourself may be added to that number, and one or two more whom you have known. But all the rest of those who from time to time among us have believed in the Lord Jesus, were in a moment brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

63. And why should it seem a thing incredible to you, who have known the power of God unto salvation (whether he hath wrought thus in your soul or no; "for there are diversities of operations, but the same Spirit"), that "the dead should hear the

voice of the Son of God," and in that moment live? Thus he useth to act, to show that when he willeth, to do is present with him. "Let there be light," said God, "and there was light. He spoke the word and it was done. Thus the heavens and the earth were created, and all the hosts of them." And this manner of acting in the present case highly suits both his power and love. There is, therefore, no hinderance on God's part, since "as his majesty is, so is his mercy." And whatever hinderance there is on the part of man, when God speaketh, it is not. Only ask then, O sinner, "and it shall be given thee," even the faith that brings salvation; and that without any merit or good work of thine; for "it is not of works, lest any man should boast." No; it is of grace, of grace alone. For "unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness."

64. "But by talking thus you encourage sinners." I do encourage them—to repent; and do not you? Do you not know how many heap sin upon sin, purely for want of such encouragement, because they think they can never be forgiven, there is no place for repentance left? Does not your heart also bleed for them? What would you think too dear to part with? What would you not do, what would you not suffer, to bring one such sinner to repentance? Could not your love "endure all things" for them? Yes; if you believed it would do them good; if you had any hope that they would be better. Why do you not believe it would do them good? Why have you not a hope that they will be better? Plainly, because you do not love them enough; not because you have not that charity which not only endureth, but at the same time believeth and hopeth all things.

65. But that you may see the whole strength of this objection I will show you, without any disguise or reserve, how I encourage the chief of sinners. My usual language to them runs thus:

O ye that deny the Lord that bought you, yet hear the word of the Lord! You seek rest, but find none. Even in laughter your heart is in heaviness. How long spend ye your labor for that which is not bread, and your strength for that which satisfieth not? You know your soul is not satisfied. It is still an aching void. Sometimes you find, in spite of your principles, a sense of guilt, an awakened conscience. That grisly phantom, religion (so you describe her), will now and then haunt you still. Righteousness looking down from heaven is indeed to us no unpleasing sight. But how does it appear to you?

Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans?
(With a horrible aspect, brooding over mortals ?)

How often are you in fear of the very things you deny? How often racking suspense? What if there be an hereafter, a judgment to come, an unhappy eternity? Do you not start at the thought? Can you be content to be always thus? Shall it be said of you also,

“Here lies a dicer, long in doubt,
If death could kill the soul, or not;
Here ends his doubtfulness; at last
Convinced; but, O, the die is cast!”

Or, are you already convinced there is no hereafter? What a poor state, then, are you in now? taking a few more dull turns upon earth, and then dropping into nothing! What kind of spirit must you be of, if you can sustain yourself under the thought, under the expectation of being in a few moments swept away by the stream of time, and then forever

Swallow'd up, and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night!

But neither, indeed, are you certain of this, nor of any thing else. It may be so; it may not. A vast scene is behind; but clouds and darkness rest upon it. All is doubt and uncertainty. You are continually tossed to and fro, and have no firm ground for the sole of your foot. O, let not the poor wisdom of man any longer exalt itself against the wisdom of God! You have fled from him long enough; at length suffer your eyes to be opened by him that made them. You want rest to your soul. Ask it of him who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not. You are now a mere riddle to yourself, and your condition full of darkness and perplexity. You are one among many restless inhabitants of a miserable, disordered world, “walking in a vain shadow, and disquieting yourself in vain.” But the light of God will speedily disperse the anxiety of your vain conjectures. By adding heaven to earth, and eternity to time, it will open such a glorious view of things as will lead you, even in the present world, to a peace which passeth all understanding.

66. O ye gross, vile, scandalous sinners, hear ye the word of the Lord. “Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live.” O, make haste; delay not the time! “Come, and let

us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments, red in his apparel? It is he on whom the Lord "hath laid the iniquities of us all!" Behold, behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away thy sins! See the only begotten Son of the Father, "full of grace and truth!" He loveth thee. He gave himself for thee. Now his bowels of compassion yearn over thee. O, believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved! "Go in peace, sin no more!"

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

HAPPY the souls who first believed,
To Jesus and each other cleaved,
Join'd by the unction from above,
In mystic fellowship of love!

Meek, simple followers of the Lamb,
They lived and spake and thought the same;

Brake the commemorative bread,
And drank the Spirit of their Head.

On God they cast their every care:
Wrestling with God in mighty prayer,
They claim'd the grace, through Jesus given;
By prayer they shut and open'd heaven.

To Jesus they perform'd their vows:
A little church in every house,
They joyfully conspired to raise
Their ceaseless sacrifice of praise.

Propriety was there unknown,
None call'd what he possess'd his own;
Where all the common blessings share,
No selfish happiness was there.

With grace abundantly endued,
A pure, believing multitude!
They all were of one heart and soul,
And only love inspired the whole.

O, what an age of golden days!
O, what a choice, peculiar race!
Washed in the Lamb's all-cleansing blood,
Anointed kings and priests to God.

Where shall I wander now to find
The successors they left behind?
The faithful, whom I seek in vain,
Are 'minish'd from the sons of men.

Ye different sects, who all declare,
"Lo, here is Christ!" or, "Christ is there!"

Your stronger proofs divinely give,
And show me where the Christians live.

Your claim, alas! ye cannot prove;
Ye want the genuine mark of love:
Thou only, Lord, thine own canst show;
For sure thou hast a Church below.

The gates of hell cannot prevail,
The Church on earth can never fail:
Ah! join me to thy secret ones!
Ah! gather all thy living stones!

Scatter'd o'er all the earth they lie,
Till thou collect them with thine eye,
Draw by the music of thy name,
And charm into a beautiful frame.

For this the pleading Spirit groans,
And cries in all thy banish'd ones:
Greatest of gifts, thy love impart,
And make us of one mind and heart!

Join every soul that looks to thee,
In bonds of perfect charity:
Now, Lord, the glorious fullness give,
And all in all forever live!

PART II.

Jesus, from whom all blessings flow,
Great builder of thy Church below,
If now thy Spirit moves my breast,
Hear, and fulfill thy own request !

The few that truly call thee Lord,
And wait thy sanctifying word,
And thee their utmost Saviour own,
Unite, and perfect them in one.

Gather them in on every side,
And in thy tabernacle hide ;
Give them a resting-place to find,
A covert from the storm and wind.

O, find them out some calm recess,
Some unfrequented wilderness !
Thou, Lord, the secret place prepare,
And hide and feed "the woman" there.

Thither collect thy little flock,
Under the shadow of their Rock :
The holy seed, the royal race,
The standing monuments of thy grace.

O, let them all thy mind express,
Stand forth thy chosen witnesses !
Thy power unto salvation show,
And perfect holiness below :

The fullness of thy grace receive,
And simply to thy glory live ;
Strongly reflect the light divine,
And in a land of darkness shine

In them let all mankind behold
How Christians lived in days of old :
Mighty their envious foes to move,
A proverb of reproach—and love.

O, make them of one soul and heart,
The all-conforming mind impart ;
Spirit of peace and unity,
The sinless mind that was in thee.

Call them into thy wondrous light,
Worthy to walk with thee in white ;
Make up thy jewels, Lord, and show
The glorious, spotless Church below.

From every sinful wrinkle free,
Redeem'd from all iniquity ;
The fellowship of saints make known ;
And, O, my God, might I be one !

O, might my lot be cast with these,
The least of Jesus' witnesses !
O, that my Lord would count me meet
To wash his dear disciples' feet !

This only thing I do require,
Thou know'st 'tis all my heart's desire,
Freely what I receive to give,
The servant of thy Church to live :

After my lowly Lord to go,
And wait upon the saints below,
Enjoy the grace to angels given,
And serve the royal heirs of heaven.

Lord, if I now thy drawings feel,
And ask according to thy will,
Confirm the prayer, the seal impart,
And speak the answer to my heart !

Tell me, or thou shalt never go,
"Thy prayer is heard, it shall be so :"
The word hath pass'd thy lips, and I
Shall with thy people live and die.

CONDITIONS OF JUSTIFICATION.

(Written in 1744.)

1. FIRST. The nature of justification. It sometimes means our acquittal at the last day (Matt. xii, 37). But this is altogether out of the present question; that justification whereof our articles and homilies speak meaning present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and, consequently, acceptance with God; who therein "de-

clares his righteousness" (or mercy, by or) "for the remission of the sins that are past," saying, "I will be merciful to thy unrighteousness, and thine iniquities I will remember no more" (Rom. iii, 25; Heb. viii, 12).

I believe the condition of this is faith (Rom. iv, 5, etc.); I mean, not only that without faith we cannot be justified, but also that as soon as any one has true faith, in that moment he is justified.

Good works follow this faith, but cannot go before it (Luke vi, 43); much less can sanctification, which implies a continued course of good works, springing from holiness of heart. But it is allowed that entire sanctification goes before our justification at the last day (Heb. xii, 14).

It is allowed, also, that repentance, and "fruits meet for repentance," go before faith (Mark i, 15; Matt. iii, 8). Repentance absolutely must go before faith; fruits meet for it, if there be opportunity. By repentance I mean conviction of sin, producing real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment; and by "fruits meet for repentance," forgiving our brother (Matt. vi, 14, 15), ceasing from evil, doing good (Luke iii, 4, 9, etc.), using the ordinances of God, and in general obeying him according to the measure of grace which we have received (Matt. vii, 7; xxv, 29). But these I cannot as yet term good works, because they do not spring from faith and the love of God.

2. By salvation I mean not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and, by consequence, all holiness of conversation.

Now, if by conversation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say holiness is the condition of it; for it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness are synonymous terms. We must therefore say, "We are saved by faith." Faith is the sole condition of this salvation. For without faith we cannot be thus saved. But whosoever believeth is saved already.

Without faith we cannot be thus saved; for we cannot rightly serve God unless we love him. And we cannot love him unless we know him; neither can we know God unless by faith. There-

fore, salvation by faith is only, in other words, the love of God by the knowledge of God; or the recovery of the image of God, by a true, spiritual acquaintance with him.

3. Faith, in general, is a divine, supernatural *ελεγχος* (evidence, or conviction) of things not seen, nor discoverable by our bodily senses, as being either past, future, or spiritual. Justifying faith implies not only a divine *ελεγχος*, that God "was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins, that he loved me, and gave himself for me. And the moment a penitent sinner believes this, God pardons and absolves him.

And as soon as his pardon or justification is witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost he is saved. He loves God and all mankind. He has "the mind that was in Christ," and power to "walk as he also walked." From that time (unless he make shipwreck of the faith) salvation gradually increases in his soul. For "so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and it springeth up, first the blade, then the ear after that the full corn in the ear."

4. The first sowing of this seed I cannot conceive to be other than instantaneous; whether I consider experience, or the word of God, or the very nature of the thing. However, I contend not for a circumstance, but the substance: if you can attain it another way, do. Only see that you do attain it; for if you fall short, you perish everlastingly.

This beginning of that vast, inward change is usually termed the new birth. Baptism is the outward sign of this inward grace, which is supposed by our Church to be given with and through that sign to all infants, and to those of riper years, if they repent and believe the Gospel. But how extremely idle are the common disputes on this head! I tell a sinner, "You must be born again." "No," say you, "he was born again in baptism. Therefore, he cannot be born again now." Alas, what trifling is this? What if he was *then* a child of God? He is *now* manifestly a child of the devil; for the works of his father he doeth. Therefore, do not play upon words. He must go through an entire change of heart. In one not yet baptized, you yourself would call that change the new birth. In him, call it what you will; but remember, meantime, that if either he or you die without it your baptism will be so far from profiting you that it will greatly increase your damnation.

5. The author of faith and salvation is God alone. It is he

that works in us both to will and to do. He is the sole giver of every good gift, and the sole author of every good work. There is no more of power than of merit in man; but as all merit is in the Son of God, in what he has done and suffered for us, so all power is in the Spirit of God. And therefore every man, in order to believe unto salvation, must receive the Holy Ghost. This is essentially necessary to every Christian, not in order to his working miracles, but in order to faith, peace, joy, and love—the ordinary fruits of the Spirit.

Although no man on earth can explain the particular manner wherein the Spirit of God works on the soul, yet whosoever has these fruits cannot but know and *feel* that God has wrought them in his heart.

Sometimes he acts more particularly on the understanding, opening or enlightening it (as the Scripture speaks), and revealing, unveiling, discovering to us “the deep things of God.”

Sometimes he acts on the wills and affections of men; withdrawing them from evil, inclining them to good, inspiring (breathing, as it were) good thoughts into them: so it has frequently been expressed, by an easy, natural metaphor, strictly analogous to רוּחַ, πνεῦμα, *spiritus* [spirit, or breath], and the words used in most modern tongues also, to denote the third person in the ever blessed Trinity. But, however it be expressed, it is certain all true faith, and the whole work of salvation, every good thought, word, and work, is altogether by the operation of the Spirit of God.

The following remarks are from Mr. Wesley’s Journal, under date of September 12, 1739:

In the evening, at Fetter-lane, I described the life of faith; and many who had fancied themselves strong therein found they were no more than new-born babes. At eight I exhorted our brethren to keep close to the Church, and to all the ordinances of God; and to aim only at living “a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.” A serious clergyman desired to know in what points we differed from the Church of England. I answered, “To the best of my knowledge, in none. The doctrines we preach are the doctrines of the Church of England; indeed, the fundamental doctrines of the Church, clearly laid down, both in her prayers, articles, and homilies.” He asked, “In what points, then, do you differ from the other clergy of the Church of England?” I answered, “In none from that part of the clergy who adhere to the doctrines of the Church; but from that

part of the clergy who dissent from the Church (though they own it not) I differ in the points following:

“First, They speak of justification either as the same thing with sanctification or as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.

“Secondly, They speak of our own holiness, or good works, as the cause of our justification; or, that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God. I believe neither our own holiness nor good works are any part of the cause of our justification; but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it; or, that for the sake of which, on account of which, we are justified before God.

“Thirdly, They speak of good works as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe no good work can be previous to justification, nor, consequently, a condition of it; but that we are justified (being till that hour ungodly, and, therefore, incapable of doing any good work) by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work.

“Fourthly, They speak of sanctification (or holiness) as if 't were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in those two points—1. The doing no harm; 2. The doing good (as it is called)—that is, the using the means of grace, and helping our neighbor.

“I believe it to be an inward thing, namely, the life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the divine nature; the mind that was in Christ; or, the renewal of our heart after the image of him that created us.

“Lastly, They speak of the new birth as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism; or, at most, a change from outward wickedness to outward goodness; from a vicious to (what is called) a virtuous life. I believe it to be an inward thing; a change from inward wickedness to inward goodness; an entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the devil (wherein we are born) to the image of God; a change from the love of the creature to the love of the Creator; from earthly and sensual to heavenly and holy affections: in a word, a change from the tempers of the spirits of darkness to those of the angels of God in heaven.

“There is, therefore, a wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference between us; so that if they speak the truth as it is in Jesus I am found a false witness before God. But if I teach the way of God in truth, they are blind leaders of the blind.”

FROM HIS JOURNAL, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1739.

IN the afternoon I was informed how many wise and learned men (who cannot in terms deny it, because our articles and homilies are not yet repealed) *explain* justification by faith. They say, 1. Justification is twofold; the first, in this life, the second, at the last day. 2. Both these are by faith alone; that is, by objective faith, or by the merits of Christ, which are the object of our faith. And this, they say, is all that St. Paul and the Church mean by “We are justified by faith only.” But they add, 3. We are not justified by subjective faith alone, that

is, by the faith which is in us. But works also must be added to this faith, as a joint condition both of the first and second justification. The sense of which hard words is plainly this: God accepts us both here and hereafter only for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered for us. This alone is the *cause* of our justification. But the *condition* thereof is not *faith alone*, but *faith and works* together.

In flat opposition to this I cannot but maintain (at least, till I have a clearer light), 1. That the justification which is spoken of by St. Paul to the Romans, and in our articles, is *not twofold*. It is one, and no more. It is the present remission of our sins, or our first acceptance with God. 2. It is true that the merits of Christ are the *sole cause* of this our justification; but it is not true that this is all which St. Paul and our Church mean by our being justified by faith only; neither is it true that either St. Paul or the Church mean by faith the merits of Christ. But, 3. By our being justified by faith only, both St. Paul and the Church mean that the *condition* of our justification is *faith alone*, and *not good works*; inasmuch as “all works done before justification have in them the nature of sin.” Lastly, that faith which is the sole condition of justification is the faith which is in us by the grace of God. It is “a sure trust which a man hath, that Christ hath loved him, and died for him.”

REGENERATION.

(Written January 25, 1757.)

ACCORDING to the whole tenor of Scripture, the being born again does really signify the being inwardly changed by the almighty operation of the Spirit of God; changed from sin to holiness; renewed in the image of Him that created us. And why must we be so changed? Because, “without holiness no man shall see the Lord;” and because, without this change, all our endeavors after holiness are ineffectual. God hath, indeed, “endowed us with understanding, and given us abundant means;” but our understanding is as insufficient for that end as are the outward means, if not attended with inward power.

I think it highly expedient to subjoin an extract from Rev. Samuel Hebden’s tract upon this subject, the more so because the tract is very scarce, having been for some time out of print:

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John iii, 5, 6).

"In this text we have,

"I. The new birth described;

"II. The necessity of it insisted on;

"III. The original corruption of every child of Adam observed, as that from which the necessity of such a change arises.

"I. The new birth is here described. Whatever this implies, the Spirit of God is the sole author of it. He does not help a man to regenerate himself, but takes the work into his own hands. A child of God, as such, is 'not born of blood;' does not become so by descent from pious parents. He is not 'born of the will of the flesh;' is not renewed by the power of his own carnal will; 'nor of man,' of any man whatsoever, 'but of God,' by the sole power of his Spirit.

"In regeneration, the Holy Spirit mortifies 'the old man,' corrupt nature, and breathes a principle of life into the soul; a principle of faith, of sincere love, and willing obedience to God. He who was 'dead in sin' is now 'dead to sin,' and 'alive to God through Jesus Christ.' God has 'created in him a clean heart, and renewed a right Spirit within him.' He has 'created' him 'unto good works,' and 'written' his 'law in his heart.' But if the Spirit of God is the sole agent in the work of regeneration; if the soul of man has no active interest or concern in his 'being born again;' if man was created holy, and regeneration re-instamps that holy image of God on the soul; if 'the new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness;' if the corruption of nature (termed 'the old man' or 'flesh') is not contracted by imitation or custom, but is an inbred hereditary distemper, coeval with our nature; if all truly good works are the fruits of a good heart, a good principle wrought in the soul; it plainly follows that the faith, hope, love, fear, which distinguish the children of God from others, are not of the nature of acquired but of infused habits or principles. To say, then, 'that all holiness must be the effect of a man's own choice and endeavor, and that by a right use of his natural powers every man may and must attain a habit of holiness,' that is, 'be born again,' however pleasing it may be to human vanity, is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture.

"And all the scriptural expressions on this head are grounded on the real nature of things. 'Sin' is of the nature of 'filth' and 'corruption.' It pollutes the whole man, and renders him as an 'unclean thing' in the sight of God. When, therefore, the Spirit of God removes this, he is said to 'create a clean heart,' to 'purify the heart,' to 'sprinkle clean water upon' us, to wash us 'from' our 'filthiness.' And this cleansing efficacy is in the text expressed by being 'born of water and of the Spirit.'

"When, therefore, our Lord speaks of being 'born of the Spirit,' his plain meaning is, There is a spiritual cleansing you must partake of, mentioned in those promises: 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony heart, and I will give you a heart of flesh.' These promises give us a plain description of the Spirit's regenerating work; without experiencing which our state is miserable now, and will be much more so hereafter.

"II. For this spiritual renovation of the soul is indispensably necessary. Without it none can 'enter the kingdom of heaven,' either the kingdom of grace or of glory.

"1. 'Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of'

grace; he cannot be a loyal subject of Jesus Christ. By nature we are subjects of Satan; and such we must remain, unless renewing grace 'translate us into the kingdom of God's dear Son.'

"2. Consequently, 'except we are born again, we cannot enter into the kingdom' of glory. Indeed, supposing he could be admitted there, what could an unregenerate sinner do in heaven? He could not possibly have any relish either for the business, the company, or the enjoyments of that world.

"III. Our Lord, having asserted the absolute necessity of the new birth, to show the ground of this necessity, adds, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' Here observe,

"1. Our Lord opposes 'flesh' and 'spirit' to each other; which opposition we often meet with. Whatever, therefore, is meant by these two, they denote things opposite.

"2. He speaks here of two several births, which are distinctly mentioned.

"3. The former of these two is spoken of as that which renders the other so necessary. Because 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh,' therefore, 'we must be born of the Spirit;' therefore, this great change must be wrought in us, or we cannot 'enter into the kingdom of God.'

"4. If the latter of these is made necessary by the former, then to be 'born flesh' is to be born corrupt and sinful. And, indeed, the word 'flesh' is very frequently taken for the corrupt principle in man. It is always so taken when it stands opposed to 'the Spirit,' or to that inwrought principle of obedience, which itself also (taking the name of its Author) is sometimes termed 'Spirit.'

"Now, in the text, whatever or whoever is born of a man, since the fall, is denominated 'flesh.' And that 'flesh' is here put, not for sinless frailty, but sinful corruption, we learn from its being opposed to the 'Spirit.' Christ was born frail as well as we, and in this sense was 'flesh;' yet, being without sin, he had no need to be 'born of the Spirit.' This is not made necessary by any sinless infirmities, but by a sinful nature only. This alone is opposite to 'the Spirit;' thus, therefore, we must understand it here.

"But Dr. Taylor says, 'To be born of the flesh is only to be naturally born of a woman.' I answer, Is not 'flesh' opposed to 'Spirit' in this verse? Is it not the Spirit of God which is spoken of in the latter clause, together with the principle of grace, which is in every regenerate person? And is any thing beside sinful corruption opposite to the Spirit of God? No, certainly! But if so, and if wherever 'flesh' is opposed to 'the Spirit' it implies sinful corruption, then it is evident to be 'born of the flesh' is to be the sinful offspring of sinful parents, so as to have need of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, on that account, even from our birth.

"If to 'walk after the flesh,' as opposed to 'walking after the Spirit,' is to follow our sinful inclinations; if to 'be in the flesh,' opposed to 'being in the Spirit,' is to be in a state of sin; if 'the flesh' and 'the Spirit' are two contrary principles, which counteract each other (Gal. v, 16, 17); if 'the works of the flesh, and the lusts of the flesh,' are opposed to 'the Spirit' and 'the fruit of the Spirit;' then, 'to be born of the flesh' must signify more than barely to be born of a woman. Had Adam transmitted a pure nature to his descendants, still each of them would have been born of a woman; but they would have had no necessity of being 'born of the Spirit,' or renewed by the Holy Ghost.

"But what is that corruption of nature which the Scripture terms *flesh*? There are two branches of it: 1. A want of original righteousness. 2. A natural propensity to sin:

"1. A want of original righteousness. God created man righteous; holiness was connatural to his soul; a principle of love and obedience to God. But when he sinned he lost this principle. And every man is now born totally void both of the knowledge and love of God.

"2. A natural propensity to sin is in every man. And this is inseparable from the other. If man is born and grows up without the knowledge or love of God he is born and grows up propense to sin, which includes two things—an aversion to what is good, and an inclination to what is evil.

"We are naturally averse to what is good. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' Nature does not, will not, cannot, submit to his holy, just, and good law. Therefore, 'they that are in the flesh cannot please God.' Being averse to the will, law, and ways of God, they are utterly indisposed for such an obedience as the relation between God and man indispensably requires.

"And as we are all naturally averse to what is good, so we are naturally inclined to what is evil. Even young children of themselves run into evil, but are with difficulty brought to practice what is good. No sooner do they discover reason than they discover evil, unreasonable dispositions. And these discovering themselves in every one, even from his early childhood, manifestly prove the inbred and universal corruption of human nature.

"But why is this corruption termed *flesh*? Not because it is confined to the body. It is the corruption of our whole nature, and is therefore termed 'the old man.' Not because it consists merely in a repugnance of the sensual appetites to reason. This is but one branch of that corruption; the whole of it is far more extensive. Not because it is primarily seated in the body; it is primarily seated in the soul. If 'sin reigns in our mortal bodies' it is because the sinful soul uses the bodily members as 'instruments of unrighteousness.'

"Nay, all which those words, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*, mean is this: All men being descended of frail and mortal parents are, like them, frail and mortal. In consequence of Adam's sin, all his descendants die.'

"I answer, 1. Though this be true, it is not the whole truth. Nor is it the proper truth of the text which speaks of our being 'born of the flesh' as the reason why we must be 'born of the Spirit.'

"2. It is not consistent with the moral perfections of God for sinless creatures to be born 'mortal.' Death, in every sense of the word, is the proper 'wages of sin.' 'Sin' has the same casual influence on death as the obedience of Christ has on eternal life.

"3. We were not only born 'mortal,' but 'children of wrath;' we who are now regenerate, as well as others.

"4. The Scripture ascribes both our 'mortality' and 'corruption' to our relation to Adam. 'In him all die;' 'through the offense of one, many,' all mankind, 'are dead,' liable to death. Again: 'By the disobedience of one,' the same, 'many are constituted sinners.' Therefore, when our Lord says, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh,' he means not only that we and our parents are 'mortal,' but that all mankind derive spiritual as well as temporal death from their first father."

FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. POTTER, DATED NOVEMBER 4,
1758.

Of the new birth, you say, "The terms of being *regenerated*, of being *born again*, of being *born of God*, are often used to express *the works* of Gospel righteousness." I cannot allow this. I know not that they are ever used in Scripture to express any outward work at all. They always express an inward work of the Spirit, whereof baptism is the outward sign. You add, "Their primary, peculiar, and precise meaning signifies" (a little impropriety of expression) "our redemption from death, and restoration to eternal life, through the grace of God." It does not, unless by *death* you mean sin; and by *eternal life*, holiness. The precise meaning of the term is "a new birth unto righteousness," an inward change from unholy to holy tempers. You go on: "This grace our Lord here calls 'entering into the kingdom of God.'" If so, his assertion is, "Except a man be born again, he cannot" be born again. Not so. What he says is, Except a man experience this change, he cannot enter into my kingdom.

You proceed: "Our holy Church doth teach us that by the laver of regeneration in baptism we are received into the number of the children of God; this is the first part of the new birth." What is the first part of the new birth? baptism? It is the outward sign of that inward and spiritual grace, but no part of it at all. It is impossible that it should be. The outward sign is no more a part of the inward grace than the body is a part of the soul. Or do you mean that regeneration is a part of the new birth? Nay, this is the whole of it. Or is it the "laver of regeneration" which is the first part of it? That cannot be; for you suppose this to be the same with baptism.

"The second part, the inward and spiritual grace, is a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." What! Is the new birth the *second part* of the new birth! I apprehend it is the first and second part, too; and surely nothing could have prevented your seeing this but the ardor of your spirit, and the impetuosity with which you rush along and trample down all before you. Your manner of writing reminds me of an honest Quaker in Cornwall, whose words I would recommend to your consideration. Being consulted by one of the Friends whether he should publish a tract which he had read to many in private, he replied, "What! Art thou not content with laying John Wesley on his back, but thou must tread his guts out, too?"

FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. DOWNES, DATED NOVEMBER 17, 1759.

You assert, "They talk of regeneration in every Christian as if it was as sudden and miraculous a conversion as that of St. Paul and the first converts to Christianity, and as if the signs of it were frightful tremors of body, and convulsive agonies of mind; not as a work graciously begun and gradually carried on by the blessed Spirit, in conjunction with our rational powers and faculties; the signs of which are sincere and universal obedience."

This is part true, part false. We do believe regeneration, or, in plain English, the new birth, to be as miraculous or supernatural a work now as it was seventeen hundred years ago. We likewise believe that the spiritual life, which commences when we are born again, must, in the nature of the thing, have a first moment, as well as the natural. But we say again and again, we are concerned for the substance of the work, not the circumstance. Let it be wrought at all, and we will not contend whether it be wrought gradually or instantaneously. "But what are the signs that it is wrought?" We never said or thought that they were either "frightful tremors of body," or "convulsive agonies of mind" (I presume you mean agonies of mind attended with bodily convulsions); although we know many persons who, before this change was wrought, felt much fear and sorrow of mind, which, in some of these, had such an effect on the body as to make all their bones to shake. Neither did we ever deny that it is "a work graciously begun by the Holy Spirit," enlightening our understanding (which, I suppose, you call "our rational powers and faculties"), as well as influencing our affections. And it is certain he "gradually carries on this work" by continuing to influence all the powers of the soul; and that the outward sign of this inward work is "sincere and universal obedience."

A sixth charge is: "They treat Christianity as a wild, enthusiastic scheme, which will bear no examination." Where, or when? In what sermon? In what tract, practical or polemical? I wholly deny the charge. I have myself closely and carefully examined every part of it, every verse of the New Testament, in the original, as well as in our own and other translations.

Nearly allied to this is the threadbare charge of enthusiasm, with which you frequently and largely compliment us. But as this also is asserted only, and not proved, it falls to the ground of itself. Meantime, your asserting it is a plain proof that you know nothing of the men you talk of. Because you know them

not, you so boldly say, "One advantage we have over them, and that is reason." Nay, that is the very question. I appeal to all mankind, whether you have it or no. However, you are sure we have it not, and are never likely to have. For "reason," you say, "cannot do much with an enthusiast, whose first principle is to have nothing to do with reason, but resolve all his religious opinions and notions into immediate inspiration." Then, by your own account, I am no enthusiast; for I resolve none of my notions into immediate inspiration. I have something to do with reason; perhaps as much as many of those who make no account of my labors. And I am ready to give up every opinion which I cannot by calm, clear reason defend. Whenever, therefore, you will try what you can do by argument, which you have not done yet, I wait your leisure, and will follow you step by step, which way soever you lead.

OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

(*Written in 1744.*)

WHAT I mean by the ordinary operations of the Holy Ghost I sum up in the words of a modern writer:

"Sanctification being opposed to our corruption, and answering fully to the latitude thereof, whatsoever of holiness and perfection is wanting in our nature must be supplied by the Spirit of God. Wherefore, being by nature we are totally void of all saving truth, and under an impossibility of knowing the will of God, this 'Spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God,' and revealeth them unto the sons of men, so that thereby the darkness of their understanding is expelled, and they are enlightened with the knowledge of God. The same Spirit which revealeth the object of faith generally to the universal Church doth also illuminate the understanding of such as believe that they may receive the truth. For 'faith is the gift of God,' not only in the object, but also in the act. And this gift is a gift of the Holy Ghost working within us. And as the increase of perfection, so the original of faith is from the Spirit of God by an internal illumination of the soul.

"The second part of the office of the Holy Ghost is the renewing of man in all the parts and faculties of his soul. For our natural corruption consisting in an aversation of our wills, and a depravation of our affections, an inclination of them to the will of God is wrought within us by the Spirit of God.

"The third part of this office is to lead, direct, and govern us in our actions and conversations. 'If we live in the Spirit,' quickened by his renovation, we must also 'walk in the Spirit,' following his direction, led by his manuduction. We are also animated and acted by the Spirit of God, who giveth 'both to will and to do;' and 'as many as are' thus 'led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God' (Rom. viii, 14). Moreover, that this direction may prove more effectual, we are guided in our prayers by the same Spirit; according to the promise, 'I will pour upon the house

of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication' (Zech. xii, 10). Whereas, then, 'this is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us;' and whereas 'we know not what we should pray for as we ought, the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered;' and 'he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God' (Rom. viii, 27). From which intercession (made for all true Christians) he hath the name of the Paraclete given him by Christ, who said, 'I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete' (John xiv, 16, 26). 'For if any man sin, we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,' saith St. John; 'who maketh intercession for us,' saith St. Paul (Rom. viii, 34). And we have 'another Paraclete,' saith our Saviour (John xiv, 16), 'which also maketh intercession for us,' saith St. Paul (Rom. viii, 27). A Paraclete, then, in the notion of the Scriptures, is an intercessor.

"It is also the office of the Holy Ghost to 'assure us of the adoption of sons,' to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance. 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.' 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' 'And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' 'For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father; the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God' (verses 15, 16).

"As, therefore, we are born again by the Spirit, and receive from him our regeneration, so we are also by the same Spirit 'assured of our adoption.' Because, being 'sons, we are also heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,' by the same Spirit we have the *pledge*, or rather the 'earnest, of our inheritance.' For 'he which establisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and hath given us the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts:' so that 'we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance.' The Spirit of God, as given unto us in this life, is to be looked upon as an earnest, being part of that reward which is promised, and, upon performance of the covenant which God hath made with us, certainly to be received."

But I have greater authority than his, and such as I reverence only less than that of the oracles of God—I mean that of our own Church. I shall close this head by setting down what occurs in her authentic records concerning either our "receiving the Holy Ghost" or his ordinary operations in all true Christians.

In her daily service she teaches us all to beseech God "to grant us his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our life may be pure and holy;" to pray for our sovereign lord the king, that God would "replenish him with the grace of his Holy Spirit;" for all the royal family, that they may be "endued with his Holy Spirit, and enriched with his heavenly grace;" for all the clergy and people, that he would "send down upon them the healthful Spirit of his grace;" for "the Catholic Church, that it may be guided and governed by his good Spirit;" and for all therein who at any time "make their common supplication unto him," that "the fellowship," or communication, "of the Holy Ghost may be with them all evermore."

Her collects are full of petitions to the same effect: "Grant that we may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit." (*Collect for Christmas Day.*) "Grant that in all our sufferings here, for the testimony of thy truth, we may by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed, and, 'being filled with the Holy Ghost,' may love and bless our persecutors." (*St. Stephen's Day.*) "Send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity." (*Quinquagesima Sunday.*) "O Lord, from whom all good things do come, grant to us, thy humble servants, that by thy *holy inspiration* we may think those things that are good, and by thy merciful guidance may perform the same." (*Fifth Sunday after Easter.*) "We beseech thee, leave us not comfortless, but send us the Holy Ghost to comfort us." (*Sunday after Ascension Day.*) "Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort." (*Whit-Sunday.*) (N. B.—The Church here teaches all Christians to claim *the Comforter*, in virtue of the promise made, John xiv.) "Grant us, Lord, we beseech thee, the Spirit, to think and do always such things as be rightful." (*Ninth Sunday after Trinity.*) "O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts." (*Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.*) "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by *the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit*, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name." (*Communion Office.*)

"Give thy Holy Spirit to this infant (or this person), that he may be born again. Give thy Holy Spirit to these persons (N. B., already baptized), that they may continue thy servants.

"Almighty God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these persons by water and the Holy Ghost; strengthen them with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them the manifold gifts of thy grace." (*Office of Confirmation.*)

From these passages it may sufficiently appear for what purposes every Christian, according to the doctrine of the Church of England, does now "receive the Holy Ghost." But this will be still more clear from those that follow; wherein the reader may likewise observe a plain, rational sense of God's *revealing* himself to us, of the *inspiration* of the Holy Ghost, and of a believer's *feeling* in himself "the mighty working" of the Spirit of Christ:

"God gave them of old grace to be his children, as he doth us now. But now, by the coming of our Saviour Christ, we have received more abundantly the Spirit of God in our hearts." (*Homily on Faith*, part ii.)

"He died to destroy the rule of the devil in us; and he rose again to send down his Holy Spirit, to 'rule in our hearts.'" (*Homily on the Resurrection.*)

"We have the Holy Spirit in our hearts, as a seal and pledge of our everlasting inheritance." (*Ibid.*)

"The Holy Ghost sat upon each of them, like as it had been cloven tongues of fire; to teach that it is he which giveth eloquence and utterance in preaching the Gospel; which engendereth a burning zeal toward God's word, and giveth all men a tongue, yea, a fiery tongue." (N. B.—Whatever occurs in any of the Journals of God's "giving me utterance," or "enabling me to speak *with power*," cannot therefore be quoted as *enthusiasm*, without wounding the Church through my side.) "So that if any man be a dumb Christian, not professing his faith openly, he giveth

men occasion to doubt lest he have not the grace of the Holy Ghost within him." (*Homily on Whit-Sunday*, part i.)

"It is the office of the Holy Ghost to sanctify; which, the more it is hid from our understanding" (that is, the more particular manner of his working), "the more it ought to move all men to wonder at the secret and mighty workings of God's Holy Spirit which is within us. For it is the Holy Ghost that doth *quicken* the minds of men, *stirring up* godly motions in their hearts. Neither doth he think it sufficient inwardly to work the new birth of man, unless he do also dwell and abide in him. 'Know ye not,' saith St. Paul, 'that ye are the temple of God, and that his Spirit dwelleth in you? Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?' Again he saith, 'Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.' For why? 'The Spirit of God dwelleth in you.' To this agreeth St. John: 'The anointing which ye have received' (he meaneth the Holy Ghost) 'abideth in you' (1 John ii, 27). And St. Peter saith the same: 'The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.' O, what comfort is this to the heart of a true Christian, to think that the Holy Ghost dwelleth in him! 'If God be with us,' as the apostle saith, 'who can be against us?' He giveth patience and joyfulness of heart in temptation and affliction, and is therefore worthily called 'the Comforter' (John xiv, 16). He doth instruct the hearts of the simple in the knowledge of God and his word; therefore, he is justly termed 'the Spirit of truth,' (John xvi, 13). And where the Holy Ghost doth instruct and teach, there is no delay at all in learning." (*Ibid.*)

From this passage I learn, first, that every true Christian now "receives the Holy Ghost," as the Paraclete or Comforter promised by our Lord (John xiv, 16); secondly, that every Christian receives him as "the Spirit of truth" (promised John xvi), to "teach him all things;" and, thirdly, that "the anointing," mentioned in the First Epistle of St. John, "abides in every Christian."

"In reading of God's word, he profiteth most that is most *inspired* with the Holy Ghost." (*Homily on reading the Scripture*, part i.)

"Human and worldly wisdom is not needful to the understanding of Scripture, but the *revelation* of the Holy Ghost, who *inspireth* the true meaning unto them that with humility and diligence search for it." (*Ibid.*, part ii.)

"Make him know and *feel* that there is no other name under heaven given unto men whereby we can be saved.

"If we *feel* our conscience at peace with God, through remission of our sin, all is of God." (*Homily on Rogation Week*, part iii.)

"If you *feel* such a faith in you, rejoice in it, and let it be daily increasing by well working." (*Homily on Faith*, part iii.)

"The faithful may *feel* wrought tranquillity of conscience, the increase of faith and hope, with many other graces of God." (*Homily on the Sacrament*, part i.)

"Godly men *feel* inwardly God's Holy Spirit inflaming their hearts with love." (*Homily on certain places of Scripture*, part i.)

"God give us grace to know these things and to *feel* them in our hearts! This knowledge and *feeling* is not of ourselves. Let us therefore meekly call upon the bountiful Spirit, the Holy Ghost, to *inspire* us with his presence, that we may be

able to hear the goodness of God to our salvation. For without his lively inspiration can we not so much as speak the name of the Mediator. 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;' much less should we be able to believe and know these great mysteries that be opened to us by Christ. 'But we have received,' saith St. Paul, 'not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God;' for this purpose, 'that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God.' In the power of the Holy Ghost resteth all ability to *know* God and to *please* him. It is he that *purifieth* the mind by his secret working. He *enlighteneth* the heart to conceive worthy thoughts of Almighty God. He sitteth in the *tongue* of man to stir him to speak his honor. He only ministereth spiritual *strength* to the powers of the *soul* and *body*. And if we have any gift whereby we may profit our neighbor, all is wrought by this one and the self-same Spirit." (*Homily for Rogation Week*, part iii.)

Every proposition which I have anywhere advanced concerning those *operations* of the Holy Ghost which, I believe, are *common* to all Christians in all ages, is here clearly maintained by our own Church.

Under a full sense of this I could not well understand for many years how it was that on the mentioning any of these great truths, even among men of education, the cry immediately arose, "An enthusiast! An enthusiast!" But I now plainly perceive this is only an old fallacy in a new shape. To object *enthusiasm* to any person or doctrine is but a decent method of begging the question. It generally spares the objecter the trouble of reasoning, and is a shorter and easier way of carrying his cause.

For instance, I assert that "till a man 'receives the Holy Ghost' he is without God in the world; that he cannot know the things of God unless God reveal them unto him by the Spirit; no, nor have even one holy or heavenly temper without the inspiration of the Holy One." Now, should one who is conscious to himself that he has experienced none of these things attempt to confute these propositions, either from Scripture or antiquity, it might prove a difficult task. What, then, shall he do? Why, cry out, "Enthusiasm! Enthusiasm!" and the work is done.

But what does he mean by *enthusiasm*? Perhaps nothing at all; few have any distinct idea of its meaning. Perhaps "something very bad," or, "something I never experienced and do not understand." Shall I tell you then what that "terrible something" is? I believe thinking men mean by *enthusiasm* a sort of religious madness, a *false imagination* of being inspired by God; and by an *enthusiast*, one that *fancies* himself under the influence of the Holy Ghost, when, in fact, he is not.

Let him prove me guilty of this who can. I will tell you once

more the whole of my belief on these heads ; and if any man will show me (by arguments, not hard names) what is wrong, I will thank God and him.

Every good gift is from God, and is given to man by the Holy Ghost. By nature there is in us no good thing ; and there can be none, but so far as it is wrought in us by that good Spirit. Have we any true knowledge of what is good ? This is not the result of our natural understanding. "The natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God : " so that we never can discern them until God "reveals them unto us by his Spirit." *Reveals*, that is, unveils, uncovers ; gives us to know what we did not know before. Have we love ? It "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He *inspires*, breathes, infuses into our soul, what of ourselves we could not have. Does our spirit rejoice in God our Saviour ? It is "joy in," or by, "the Holy Ghost." Have we true inward peace ! It is "the peace of God," wrought in us by the same Spirit. Faith, peace, joy, love, are all his fruits. And as we are figuratively said to *see* the light of faith, so, by a like figure of speech, we are said to *feel* this peace and joy and love ; that is, we have an inward experience of them, which we cannot find any fitter word to express.

The reasons why, in speaking of these things, I use those terms (*inspiration* particularly) are, (1) because they are scriptural ; (2) because they are used by our Church ; (3) because I know none better. The word "*influence* of the Holy Ghost," which I suppose you use, is both a far stronger and a less natural term than inspiration. It is far stronger, even as far as "flowing into the soul" is a stronger expression than "breathing upon it ;" and less natural, as *breathing* bears a near relation to spirit, to which *flowing in* has only a distant relation.

But you thought I had "meant *immediate inspiration*." So I do, or I mean nothing at all. Not, indeed, such inspiration as is *sine mediis*. [Without means.] But all inspiration, though by means, is *immediate*. Suppose, for instance, you are employed in private prayer, and God pours his love into your heart. God then acts *immediately* on your soul ; and the love of him you then experience is as *immediately* breathed into you by the Holy Ghost as if you had lived seventeen hundred years ago. Change the term : say, God then *assists* you to love him. Well, and is not this *immediate assistance* ? Say, his Spirit *concurs* with yours. You gain no ground. It is *immediate concurrence*, or

none at all. God, a spirit, acts upon your spirit. Make it out any otherwise if you can.

I cannot conceive how that harmless word *immediate* came to be such a bugbear in the world. "Why, I thought you meant such inspiration as the apostles had; and such a receiving the Holy Ghost as that was at the day of Pentecost." I do, in part; indeed, I do not mean that Christians now receive the Holy Ghost in order to work miracles, but they do doubtless now "receive," yea, are "filled with, the Holy Ghost," in order to be filled with the fruits of that blessed Spirit. And he inspires into all true believers now a degree of the same peace and joy and love which the apostles felt in themselves on that day when they were first "filled with the Holy Ghost."

I have now considered the most material objections I know which have been lately made against the great doctrines I teach. I have produced, so far as in me lay, the strength of those objections, and then answered them, I hope, in the spirit of meekness. And now I trust it appears that these doctrines are no other than the doctrines of Jesus Christ; that they are all evidently contained in the word of God, by which alone I desire to stand or fall; and that they are fundamentally the same with the doctrines of the Church of England, of which I do, and ever did, profess myself a member.

But there remains one objection which, though relating to the head of doctrine, yet is independent on all that went on before; and that is, "You cannot agree in your doctrines among yourselves. One holds one thing and one another. Mr. Whitefield anathematizes Mr. Wesley; and Mr. Wesley anathematizes Mr. Whitefield. And yet each pretends to be led by the Holy Ghost, by the infallible Spirit of God! Every reasonable man must conclude from hence that neither one nor the other is led by that Spirit."

I need not say how continually this has been urged, both in common conversation and from the press (I am grieved to add, and from the pulpit, too; for, if the argument were good, it would overturn the Bible); nor how great stress has been continually laid upon it. Whoever proposes it, proposes it as demonstration, and generally claps his wings, as being quite assured it will admit of no answer.

And, indeed, I am in doubt whether it does admit (I am sure it does not require) any other answer than that coarse one of the countryman to the Romish champion, "Bellarmine, thou liest."

For every proposition contained herein is grossly, shamelessly false. (1) "You cannot agree in your doctrines among yourselves." Who told you so? All our fundamental doctrines I have recited above. And in every one of these we do and have agreed for several years. In these we hold one and the same thing. In smaller points each of us thinks, and lets think. (2) "Mr. Whitefield anathematizes Mr. Wesley." Another shameless untruth. Let any one read what Mr. Whitefield wrote, even in the heat of controversy, and he will be convinced of the contrary. (3) "And Mr. Wesley anathematizes Mr. Whitefield." This is equally false and scandalous. I reverence Mr. Whitefield, both as a child of God and a true minister of Jesus Christ. (4) "And yet each pretends to be led by the Holy Ghost, by the infallible Spirit of God." Not in our private opinions; nor does either of us pretend to be any farther led by the Spirit of God than every Christian must pretend to be, unless he will deny the Bible. For only "as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." Therefore, if you do not pretend to be led by him, too, yea, if it be not so in fact, "you are none of his."

And now what is become of your demonstration? Leave it to the carmen and porters, its just proprietors; to the zealous apple-women that cry after me in the street, "This is he that rails at the *Whole Dutiful of Man*." But let every one that pretends to learning or reason be ashamed to mention it any more.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S TESTIMONY TO OUR CONSCIENCE.

ST. PAUL begins the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans with the great privilege of every Church believer (whether Jew or Gentile before), "There therefore is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," engrafted into him by faith, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For," now every one of them may truly say, "the law," or power, "of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," given unto me for his sake, "hath made me free from the law," or power, "of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin," did, when he "condemned," crucified, put to death, destroyed, "sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (verses 1-5).

Is it not evident that the apostle is here describing a true Christian, a holy believer? in opposition, not particularly to a Jew, much less to the Jewish law, but to every unholy man, to all, whether Jews or Gentiles, "who walk after the flesh?" He goes on:

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (verses 6-8).

The opposition between a holy and unholy man is still glaring and undeniable. But can any man discern the least glimmering of opposition between the Christian and the Jewish law?

The apostle goes on: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (verses 9-14).

Is there one word here, is there any the least intimation, of miraculous gifts, or of the Jewish law?

It follows, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;" such as all sinners have when they are first stirred up to seek God and begin to serve him from a slavish fear of punishment; "but ye have received the Spirit of adoption," of free love, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself," which God hath sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (verses 15, 16).

I am now willing to leave it, without farther comment, to the judgment of every impartial reader, whether it does not appear from the whole scope and tenor of the text and context taken together that this passage does not refer to the Jewish law, nor to the public testimony of miracles; neither of which can be dragged in without putting the utmost force on the natural meaning of the words. And if so it will follow that this "witness of the Spirit" is the private testimony given to our own consciences;

which, consequently, all sober Christians may claim without any danger of enthusiasm.

THE IMMEDIATE TESTIMONY.

(Written Dec. 30, 1745.)

THAT logical evidence, that we are the children of God, I do not either exclude or despise. But it is far different from the direct witness of the Spirit, of which, I believe, St. Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Romans, and which, I doubt not, is given to many thousand souls who never saw my face. But I spoke only of those I personally knew, concerning whom, indeed, I find my transcriber has made a violent mistake, writing 13,000 instead of 1,300. I might add those whom I have known by their writings; but I cannot lay so much stress on their evidence. I cannot have so full and certain a knowledge of a writer as of one I talk with face to face; and therefore I think the experiences of this kind are not to be compared with those of the other.

One, indeed, of this kind I was reading yesterday, which is exceeding clear and strong. You will easily pardon my transcribing part of his words. They are in St. Austin's Confessions: *Intravi in intima mea, duce te: Et potui, quoniam factus es adjutor meus. Intravi et vidi qualicumque oculo animæ meæ, supra eundem oculum animæ meæ, supra mentem meam, lucem Domini incommutabilem: Non hanc vulgarem, conspicuam omni carni; nec quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat; non hoc illa erat, sed aliud; aliud valde ab istis omnibus. Nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut; cælum super terram. Sed superior, quia ipsa fecit me. Qui novit Veritatem, novit eam. Et qui novit eam, novit æternitatem. Charitas novit eam.*

O æterna Veritas! Tu es Deus meus! Tibi suspiro die ac nocte. Et cum te primum cognovi, tu assumpsisti me, ut viderem esse, quod viderem. Et reverberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei, radians in me vehementer; et contremui amore et horrore: Et inveni me longe esse a te. Et dixi, Nunquid nihil est Veritas? Et clamasti de longinquo: Immo vero; Ego sum, qui sum. Et audivi, sicut auditur in corde, et non erat prorsus unde dubitare. Faciliusque dubitarem vivere me, quam non esse Veritatem. (Lib. 7, cap. 10.)*

* "Under thy guidance, I entered into my inmost self: and I was enabled to do so, because thou assistedst me. I entered, and saw with the eye of my soul, of whatsoever sort it be, the immutable light of the Lord above the same eye of my soul, above my mind: not this com-

From many such passages as these, which I have occasionally read, as well as from what I have myself seen and known, I am induced to believe that God's ordinary way of converting sinners to himself is by "suddenly inspiring them with an immediate testimony of his love, easily distinguishable from fancy." I am assured thus he hath wrought in all I have known (except, perhaps, three or four persons), of whom I have reasonable ground to believe that they are really turned from the power of Satan to God.

With regard to the definition of *faith*, if you allow that it is such "an inward conviction of things invisible as is the gift of God in the same sense wherein hope and charity are," I have little to object; or, that it is "such an assent to all Christian truths as is productive of all Christian practice." In terming either faith or hope or love supernatural I only mean that they are not the effect of any or all of our natural faculties, but are wrought in us (be it swiftly or slowly) by the Spirit of God. But I would rather say, Faith is "productive of all Christian holiness" than of "all Christian practice," because men are so exceeding apt to rest in practice, so called—I mean in outside religion; whereas true religion is eminently seated in the heart, renewed in the image of him that created us.

Concerning the instantaneous and the gradual work, what I still affirm is this: that I know hundreds of persons whose hearts were one moment filled with fear and sorrow and pain, and the next with peace and joy in believing, yea, joy unspeakable, full of glory; that the same moment they experienced such a love of God and so fervent a good-will to all mankind (attended with power over all sin) as till then they were wholly unacquainted with; that nevertheless the peace and love thus sown in their hearts received afterward a gradual increase; and that to this subsequent increase the Scriptures do manifestly refer.

mon light, visible to all flesh; nor as it were a greater light of the same kind, it was not of this description, but different; entirely different from all these. Nor was it so above my mind as heaven is above the earth: but above, because it made me. Whoever knows the Truth, knows this light: and whoever knows it, knows eternity. Love knows it.

O eternal Truth! thou art my God! Day and night I pant after thee. And when I first became acquainted with thee, thou didst take me, that I might see that there was something to behold. Thou didst also beat back the weakness of my sight, shining mightily into me; and I trembled with love and awe, and found myself to be far from thee. And I said, Has Truth no existence? And thou proclaimedst from afar: Nay, verily; I AM THAT I AM. And I heard, with the hearing of the heart, and there was no place whatever for doubt. I could more easily doubt my own existence than that of Truth." (Book 7, chapter 10.)

THE DOCTRINE OF THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT DEFENDED.

(Written March 25, 1747.)

YOU think I assert a thing impossible. What is impossible? that the Spirit of God should bear a clear, perceptible witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Surely, no! Whether this be the fact or not, no man of reason will say it is impossible. Or that the Spirit of God should cease to bear this witness? Neither can the possibility of this be denied. The thing, then, which is supposed impossible is this, that a man who once had it should ever doubt whether he had it or no—that is (as you subjoin), “if he continue sound in mind” (or understanding) “and memory.” Right! “If he continue;” but the very supposition is that in this respect he does not continue so. While he did so continue he could not doubt. But his understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that divine work well-nigh erased out of his memory. Nor can I think “it is vain to have recourse here to the *ενεργεια* [working] of the power of darkness.” I verily believe, as it was the God of heaven who once shone in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, so it is the god of this world who hath now blinded his heart, so that the glorious light cannot shine upon it.

If the Quakers hold the same perceptible inspiration with me, I am glad; and it is neither better nor worse for their holding it; although if I “distinguish it away” I do not hold it at all. But do I distinguish it away, or any point which I believe to be the truth of God? I am not conscious of this. But when men tack absurdities to the truth of God, with which it hath nothing to do, I distinguish away those absurdities, and let the truth remain in its native purity.

It was several months before my correspondence with you that I thus distinguished away perceptible inspiration; declaring to all men, “By *perceiving* or *feeling* the operations of the Spirit I mean being inwardly conscious of them.” “By the operations of the Spirit I do not mean the manner in which he operates in a Christian.”

This I mentioned in my last. But it is certain, over and above those other graces which the Holy Spirit inspires into, or operates in, a Christian, and over and above his imperceptible

influences, I do intend all mankind should understand me to assert (what I therefore express in the clearest language I am master of) every Christian believer hath a perceptible testimony of the Spirit that he is a child of God. I use the phrase *testimony of the Spirit*, rather than *inspiration*, because it has a more determinate meaning. And I desire men to know what I mean, and what I do not; that I may not fight as one that beateth the air.

Is there “not one word said of this, either in the ‘Farther Appeal,’ or in any one place in the Bible?” I think there is in the Bible, in the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter to the Romans. And is not this very place proved to describe the ordinary privilege of every Christian believer, in the “Farther Appeal,” from the forty-fifth to the forty-ninth, and from the fifty-sixth to the fifty-ninth page?

Give me leave to remind you of some of the words. In the forty-ninth page the argument concludes thus: “It will follow that this witness of the Spirit is the private testimony given to our own consciences, which, consequently, all sober Christians may claim, without any danger of enthusiasm.” In the fifty-seventh page are these words: “Every one that is born of God, and doth not commit sin, by his very actions, saith, ‘Our Father, which art in heaven;’ the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. According to Origen, therefore, this testimony of the Spirit is not any public testimony by miracles, but an inward testimony belonging in common to all that are born of God.” Once more: in the fifty-eighth page are these words: “He brings yet another proof of the superiority of those who had this Spirit of adoption: ‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God.’ ‘I prove this,’ says he, ‘not only from the voice itself, but also from the cause whence that voice proceeds. For the Spirit suggests the words while we thus speak, which he hath elsewhere expressed more plainly, *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!* But what is, *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit?*’ He means the Paraclete by the gift given unto us.” (But that this was an extraordinary gift we have no intimation at all, neither before nor after.) “And when the Spirit beareth witness, what doubt is left? If a man or an angel spake, some might doubt; but when the Most High beareth witness to us, who can doubt any longer?”

I am mistaken if this does not come home to the point, to the

question now before us; describing a perceptible testimony of the Holy Ghost, "directly felt to be worked by himself."

But I will waive all authorities, that of Origen and Chrysostom, as well as of Hannah Richardson (though not a weak woman, but eminently the reverse) and Averel Spencer (though not a wicked one); only observing that your argument proves too much. I am as fully assured to-day, as I am of the shining of the sun, that the Scriptures are of God. I cannot possibly deny or doubt of it now; yet I may doubt of it to-morrow, as I have done heretofore a thousand times, and that after the fullest assurance preceding. Now, if this be "a demonstration that my former assurance was a mere fancy," then farewell all revelation at once!

But to come closer yet, and weigh the point in debate in the balance of plain reason: You must allow there is a testimony of the Spirit with our Spirit, that we are the children of God. "But," you say, "it is not a perceptible one." How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed, (1) The Spirit of God (2) bears testimony to my spirit, (3) that I am a child of God. But I am not to perceive it. Not to perceive what? the first, second, or third particular? Am I not to perceive what is testified, that I am a child of God? Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or, am I not to perceive that it is testified to my spirit. Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own soul. Or, lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit; but not to perceive who it is that testifies, not to know it is the Spirit of God? O, sir, if there really be a man in the world who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies? who it is that speaks to his heart? that speaks in his inmost soul as never man spake? If he does not, he is ignorant of the whole affair. If you are in this state, I pray God you may say from the heart, "Lord, what I know not, teach thou me." How much better were this than to canonize your own ignorance as the only knowledge and wisdom, and to condemn all the generation of God's children of "idiotism and madness?"

LETTER TO MR. JOHN SMITH, JULY 10, 1747.

This is there shown, both by Scripture, by reason, and by authority, particularly that of Origen and Chrysostom, whom his lordship of Lichfield had cited in his charge, as asserting just

the contrary. But, waiving authorities, I reasoned thus: "You allow there is a testimony of the Spirit with our spirit that we are the children of God. But you say it is not a perceptible one. How is this? Let us examine it thoroughly. It is allowed, (1) The Spirit of God (2) bears testimony to my spirit, (3) that I am a child of God. But I am not to perceive it. Not to perceive what? the first, second, or third particular? Am I not to perceive what is testified—that I am a child of God? Then it is not testified at all. This is saying and unsaying in the same breath. Or am I not to perceive that it is testified to my spirit? Yea, but I must perceive what passes in my own soul! Or, lastly, am I to perceive that I am a child of God, and that this is testified to my spirit, but not to perceive who it is that testifies? not to know it is the Spirit of God? O, sir, if there be really a man in the world who hath this testimony in himself, can it be supposed that he does not know who it is that testifies? who it is that speaks to his heart?"

Instead of giving a direct answer to this you have recourse to the same supposition with his lordship of Lichfield and Coventry, namely, that there was once an inward, perceptible testimony of the Spirit, but that it was peculiar to the early ages of the Church.

"There are three ways," say you, "in which the Holy Spirit may be said to bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: (1) By external, miraculous attestations; (2) by internal, plainly perceptible whispers." (I must add, "not in works, at least, not always, but by some kind of impressions equivalent thereto"); "(3) by his standing testimony in the Holy Scriptures. The apostle had all these three; Origen and Chrysostom, probably the two latter. But if St. Bernard, several hundred years after, pretended to any other than the third, his neighbors would naturally ask for proof, either that it should be so by Scripture or that it was so by facts."

Well, then, let us suppose St. Bernard and one of his neighbors to be talking together on this subject. On St. Bernard's saying, "The Spirit of God bears witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God," his neighbor replies, "I suppose he does, but not by an inward, plainly perceptible testimony." "Yes; by an inward, plainly perceptible testimony. I now have this testimony in myself; I plainly perceive that I am a child of God, and that it is his Spirit who testifies it to my spirit." "I fear you are somewhat enthusiastically given. I allow God's standing testimony in the Scriptures; but I cannot allow that there is now any such thing as this inward testimony, unless you can either prove by Scripture that it should be so or by facts that it is so."

"Are not these words Scripture: 'The Spirit itself beareth testimony with our spirit, that we are the children of God?'"

"Yes; but the question is, how they are to be understood; for I deny that they speak of an inward testimony. They speak of the outward, standing testimony of God in the Holy Scriptures."

"You put a manifest force upon the text. You cannot prove that it speaks of any outward testimony at all. But the words immediately preceding prove to a demonstration that it speaks of an inward testimony: 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage unto fear;' (is not fear an inward thing?) 'but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!' The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, even the same Spirit which 'God hath sent forth into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!'"

"I do not deny that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit. But I deny your peculiar interpretation of this text. I deny that this text at all favors an inward, perceptible testimony." "The Spirit which God hath sent into my heart, and which now cries in my heart, 'Abba, Father,' now beareth testimony with my spirit, that I am a child of God. How can these words be interpreted at all but of an inward, perceptible testimony?"

"I tell you of God's standing testimony in Scripture." "This is a palpable violence to the words. They no more speak of Scripture than of miracles. They manifestly speak of what passes in the heart, the spirit, the inmost soul of a believer, and that only."

But you would say, "Suppose this Scripture to prove that it should be so, can you show by facts that it is so?" Not if you take it for granted that every one who speaks of having this witness in himself is an enthusiast. You are then in no danger of proof from this quarter. You have a short answer to every fact which can be alleged.

But you turn the tables. You say it is I who allow that "many of God's children do not continue in sound mind and memory." I allowed, (1) A man feels the testimony of God's Spirit, and cannot then deny or doubt his being a child of God. (2) After a time this testimony is withdrawn: not from every child of God; many retain the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end. (3) Then he may doubt whether that testimony was of God, and perhaps, at length, deny that it was; especially if his heart be hardened by the deceitfulness of his sin. And yet he may be all this time, in every other respect, of "sound memory, as well as understanding." In this respect I

allowed he is not—that is, “his understanding is now darkened, and the very traces of that divine work well-nigh erased out of his memory.” So I expressly determined the sense wherein I allowed, “he does not continue in sound mind and memory.” But did I allow that even then he was *non compos mentis*—a madman, in the common sense? Nothing less; I allowed no more than, the divine light being withdrawn, his mind was again dark as to the things of God; and that he had forgotten *τον καθαρισμον των παλαι αυτου αμαρτιων* [the purification from his former sins] (2 Pet. i, 9), well-nigh, as if had it never been.

But you say, “If variable facts be produced, to-day asserted, to-morrow denied.” Nay, the facts, whether asserted or denied, are still invariable. “But if they be ever doubted or denied, they never were plainly perceptible.” I cannot discern any force in that consequence; however, if they are afterward “denied, they are not from Him ‘in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.’” Neither is this consequence good. Though God is ever the same, man may either assert or deny his works. “The spirit of man, and his fancies or opinions, may vary; but God and his facts cannot.” Thus far they can and do. God does not now bear witness as he did before. And this variation of the fact makes way for a variation in the judgment of him who had that witness, but now hath it not. “You may be fully of opinion to-day that the Scriptures are of God, and doubt of this to-morrow. But what is this to the purpose?” Very much. I am as fully convinced to-day that the Scriptures are of God as that the sun shines. And this conviction (as every good gift) cometh from the Father of lights. Yet I may doubt of it to-morrow. I may throw away the good gift of God. “But we were speaking not of man’s opinions, but of God’s facts.” We were speaking of both; of man’s opinions, or judgment, concerning God’s facts. “But could he to whom Christ said, ‘Thy sins are forgiven thee,’ ever doubt or deny that Christ said so?” I question not but in process of time he might; particularly if he drew back unto perdition. But however that be, it is no “blasphemous supposition,” but a plain, undeniable truth, that the god of this world can obliterate what the God of heaven has strongly imprinted upon the soul; yea, and that he surely will, unless we stir up the gift of God which is in us by earnestly and continually watching unto prayer.

I presume you do not deny that a believer, one who has the witness in himself, may make “shipwreck of the faith;” and,

consequently, lose the witness (however it be explained) which he once had of his being a child of God. The darkness which then covers his soul again, I ascribe (in part) to the energy of Satan, who *ενεργει* (worketh), according to the apostle, in the children of unbelief, whether they did once believe or no. And has he not much power even on the children of God? to disturb, though not to destroy? to throw fiery darts without number, especially against those who, as yet, are but weak in the faith? to inject doubts and fears? sometimes unbelieving, sometimes even blasphemous thoughts? And how frequently will they be wounded thereby, if they have not put on the whole armor of God!

You add: "If we reply they are enthusiasts in the world, you can keep your temper no longer; and the only answer is, if we perceive not that witness in ourselves, we are ignorant of the whole affair, and doomed to the 'everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'" I said not so. I can keep my temper (blessed be God!) if you call me a hundred enthusiasts; if you affirm I am ten times more of an enthusiast than that poor Quaker probably was. The sharpest word I said was, "If a man does not know who it is that testifies with his spirit he is a child of God, he is ignorant of the whole affair." But I felt no anger when I said this. Nor do I now. Though I still think (because you say it yourself) that you are ignorant of this whole affair, of the inward testimony for which I contend, yet am I far from dooming you to everlasting fire. What you know not, I trust God will reveal unto you.

LETTER TO MR. RICHARD TOMPSON,* DATED JULY 25, 1755.

SIR: It would be a pleasure to me to write more largely than my time will now permit. Of all the disputants I have known, you are the most likely to convince me of any mistakes I may be in; because you have found out the great secret of speaking the truth in love. When it is thus proposed it must surely win its way into every heart which is not purposely shut against it.

* This person was a member of the Methodist Society at an early period after its formation. He afterward separated himself from his old friends, and questioned the truth of some of their religious tenets, especially the witness of the Spirit, and Christian perfection. He addressed several letters to Mr. Wesley, under the assumed name of P. V., but in his last letter disclosed his real name. The entire correspondence was published, with Mr. Wesley's consent, in the year 1760, in an octavo pamphlet, with the following title: "Original Letters between the Reverend Mr. John Wesley and Mr. Richard Tompson, respecting the Doctrine of Assurance, as held by the former: wherein that tenet is fully examined; with some Strictures on Christian Perfection." From this pamphlet, the subjoined letters have been copied.—EDIT. WORKS.

That you may clearly see wherein we agree or wherein we differ I have sent you the minutes of some of our late conferences. Several concessions are made therein, both with regard to assurance and Christian perfection; some difficulties cleared, and a few arguments proposed, though very nakedly and briefly. When you have read these you may come directly to any point of controversy which may still remain; and if you can show me that any further concessions are needful I shall make them with great pleasure.

On the subject of your last, I can but just observe, first, with regard to the assurance of faith, I apprehend that the whole Christian Church in the first centuries enjoyed it. For, though we have few points of doctrine explicitly taught in the small remains of the ante-Nicene fathers, yet, I think, none that carefully reads Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, Origen, or any other of them can doubt whether either the writer himself possessed it, or all whom he mentions as real Christians. And I really conceive, both from the *Harmonia Confessionum*, and whatever else I have occasionally read, that all the Reformed Churches in Europe did once believe, "Every true Christian has the divine evidence of his being in favor with God."

So much for authority. The point of experience is touched upon in the conferences.

As to the nature of the thing, I think a divine conviction of pardon is directly implied in the evidence, or conviction, of things unseen. But if not, it is no absurdity to suppose that, when God pardons a mourning, broken-hearted sinner, his mercy obliges him to another act—to witness to his spirit that he has pardoned him.

I know that I am accepted; and yet that knowledge is sometimes shaken, though not destroyed, by doubt or fear. If that knowledge were destroyed, or wholly withdrawn, I could not then say I had Christian faith. To me it appears the same thing to say, "I *know* God has accepted me," or "I have a *sure trust* that God has accepted me."

I agree with you that justifying faith cannot be a conviction that I am justified; and that a man who is not assured that his sins are forgiven may yet have a kind or degree of faith which distinguishes him not only from a devil, but also from a heathen; and on which I may admit him to the Lord's Supper. But still I believe the proper Christian faith which purifies the heart implies such a conviction. I am, sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake.

TO THE SAME.

FEBRUARY 5, 1756.

SIR: I was in Cornwall when your last was brought to the Foundery and delivered to my brother. When I returned, it was mislaid and could not be found, so that I did not receive it till some months after the date.

You judge right with regard to the tract inclosed to you. It was sent to you by mistake for another that bears the same name.

Christian perfection, we agree, may stand aside for the present. The point now to be considered is Christian faith. This, I apprehend, implies a divine evidence, or conviction, of our acceptance. You apprehend it does not.

In debating this (or indeed any) point with you, I lie under a great disadvantage. First, you know me; whereas I do not know you. Secondly, I am a very slow, you seem to be a very swift, writer. Thirdly, my time is so taken up from day to day and from week to week that I can spare very little from my stated employments; so that I can neither write so largely nor so accurately as I might otherwise do. All, therefore, which you can expect from me is not a close-wrought chain of connected arguments, but a short sketch of what I should deduce more at large if I had more leisure.

I believe the ancient fathers are far from being silent on our question; though none that I know have treated it professedly. But I have not leisure to wade through that sea. Only to the argument from the baptism of heretics I reply, if any had averred, during that warm controversy, "I received a sense of pardon when I was baptized by such a heretic," those on the other side would in no wise have believed him; so that the dispute would have remained as warm as ever. I know this from plain fact. Many have received a sense of pardon when I baptized them. But who will believe them when they assert it? Who will put any dispute on this issue?

I know, likewise, that Luther, Melancthon, and many other (if not all) of the reformers frequently and strongly assert that every believer is conscious of his own acceptance with God; and that by a supernatural evidence, which if any choose to term immediate revelation he may. But neither have I leisure to re-examine this cloud of witnesses. Nor, indeed, as you justly observe, would the testimony of them all together be sufficient to establish an unscriptural doctrine. Therefore, after all, we must be deter-

mined by higher evidence. And herein we are clearly agreed; we both appeal "to the law and to the testimony." May God enable us to understand it aright!

But, first, that you may not beat the air by disproving what I never intended to prove, I will show you, as distinctly as I can, what my sentiments are upon the question; and the rather because I plainly perceive you do not understand them. You seem to think I allow no degrees in grace, and that I make no distinction between the full assurance of faith, and a low or common measure of it.

Several years ago some clergymen and other gentlemen, with whom we had a free conversation, proposed the following questions to my brother and me, to which we gave the answers subjoined:

"JUNE 25, 1744.

"QUESTION. What is faith?

"ANSWER. Faith, in general, is a divine, supernatural *ελεγχος* [evidence, or conviction] of things not seen—that is, past, future, or spiritual. It is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God. Justifying faith is a divine *ελεγχος* that Christ loved *me* and gave himself for *me*.

"Q. Have all Christians this faith? And may not a man have it and not know it?

"A. That all Christians have such a faith as implies a consciousness of God's love appears from Rom. viii, 15; Eph. iv, 32; 2 Cor. xiii, 5; Heb. viii, 10; 1 John iv, 10; v, 1, etc. And that no man can have it, and not know that he has, appears from the nature of the thing. For faith after repentance is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness. It appears also from its immediate fruits, which are peace, joy, love, and power over sin.

"Q. Does any one believe any longer than he sees, loves, obeys God?

"A. We apprehend not; *seeing God* being the very essence of faith; love and obedience the inseparable properties of it."

"AUGUST 2, 1745.

"QUESTION. Is an assurance of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favor? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?

"ANSWER. We dare not positively say there are not.

"Q. Is it necessary to final salvation in those (as papists) who never heard it preached?

"A. We know not how far invincible ignorance may excuse. 'Love hopeth all things.'

"Q. But what if one who does hear it preached should die without it?

"A. We determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of Him that made it.

"Q. Does a man believe any longer than he sees a reconciled God?

"A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be very many degrees of seeing God; even as many as are between seeing the sun with the eyelids closed and with the eyes open."

The doctrine which I espouse, till I receive further light, being thus explained and limited, I observe:

First. A divine conviction of my being reconciled to God is, I think, directly implied (not in a divine evidence, or conviction of something else, but) in a divine conviction that Christ loved *me* and gave himself for *me*, and still more clearly in the Spirit's bearing witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God.

Secondly. I see no reason either to retract or soften the expression, "God's mercy, in some cases, obliges him to act thus and thus." Certainly, as his own nature obliges him (in a very clear and sound sense) to act according to truth and justice in all things; so, in some sense, his love obliged him to give his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish. So much for the phrase. My meaning is, the same compassion which moves God to pardon a mourning, broken-hearted sinner moves him to comfort that mourner by witnessing to his spirit that his sins are pardoned.

Thirdly. You think "full assurance excludes all doubt." I think so, too. But there may be faith without *full assurance*. And these lower degrees of faith do not exclude doubts which frequently mingle therewith, more or less. But this you cannot allow. You say it cannot be shaken without being overthrown, and trust I shall be "convinced upon reflection that the distinction between *shaken* and *destroyed* is *absolutely* without a difference." Hark! The wind rises: the house *shakes*; but it is not *overthrown*. It *totters*; but it is not *destroyed*.

You add, "*Assurance* is quite a distinct thing from *faith*. Neither does it depend upon the same agent. Faith is an act of my mind; assurance an act of the Holy Ghost." I answer, first, the assurance in question is no other than the full assurance of faith; therefore it cannot be a distinct thing from faith, but only so high a degree of faith as excludes all doubt and fear. Secondly, this *plerophory*, or *full assurance*, is doubtless wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. But so is every degree of true faith; yet the mind of man is the subject of both. I believe feebly; I believe without all doubt.

Your next remark is, "The Spirit's witnessing that we are accepted cannot be the faith whereby we are accepted." I allow it. A conviction that we are justified cannot be implied in justifying faith.

You subjoin, "A *sure trust* that God hath accepted me is not the same thing with *knowing* that God has accepted me." I

think it is the same thing with some degree of that knowledge. But it matters not whether it be so or no. I will not contend for a term. I contend only for this, that every true Christian believer has "a sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ he is reconciled to God;" and that, in consequence of this, he is able to say, "The life which I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

It is a very little thing to excuse a warm expression (if you need any such excuse), while I am convinced of your real goodwill to, sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake.

TO THE SAME.

FEBRUARY 18, 1756.

SIR: You ask,

1. "Can a man who has not a *clear assurance* that his sins are forgiven be in a state of justification?"

I believe there are some instances of it.

2. "Can a person be in a state of justification who, being asked, 'Do you know your sins are forgiven?' answers, 'I am not *certainly sure*, but I do not entertain the *least doubt* of it?'"

I believe he may.

3. "Can he who answers, 'I *trust* they are?'"

It is very possible he may be in that state.

4. "Can any one *know* that his sins are forgiven while he *doubts* thereof?"

Not at that instant when he doubts of it. But he may generally know it, though he doubts at some particular time.

I answer as plainly and simply as I can, that if I am in a mistake I may the more easily be convinced of it.

TO THE SAME.

MARCH 15, 1756.

MY DEAR BROTHER: My belief, in general, is this: that every Christian believer has a divine conviction of his reconciliation with God. The sum of those concessions is, "I am inclined to think there may be some exceptions."

Faith implies both the perceptive faculty itself and the act of perceiving God and the things of God. And the expression, *seeing God*, may include both the *act* and the *faculty* of seeing him.

Bishop Pearson's definition is abundantly too wide for the faith

of which we are speaking. Neither does he give that definition either of justifying or saving faith. But if he did I should prefer the definition of Bishop Paul.

A clear conviction of the love of God cannot remain in any who do not walk closely with God. And I know no one person who has lost this without some voluntary defect in his conduct, though perhaps at the time he was not conscious of it, but upon prayer it was revealed to him.

MR. WESLEY'S CONVERSION.

(From his Journal, April and May, 1738.)

MR. KINCHIN went with me to the castle, where, after reading prayers and preaching on "It is appointed unto men once to die," we prayed with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having "no rest in" his "bones, by reason of" his "sins." After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, "I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me." The same composed cheerfulness he showed when he was carried to execution; and in his last moments he was the same, enjoying a perfect peace in confidence that he was "accepted in the beloved."

Saturday, April 1.—Being at Mr. Fox's society my heart was so full that I could not confine myself to the forms of prayer which we were accustomed to use there. Neither do I purpose to be confined to them any more, but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions.

Sunday 2.—Being Easter day, I preached in our college chapel on, "The hour that cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." I preached in the afternoon, first at the castle and then at Carfax, on the same words. I see the promise, but it is afar off.

Believing it would be better for me to wait for the accomplishment of it in silence and retirement, on Monday, 3, I complied with Mr. Kinchin's desire, and went to him at Dummer, in Hampshire. But I was not suffered to stay here long, being earnestly pressed to come up to London, if it were only for a few days. Thither, therefore, I returned on Tuesday, 18.

Saturday, 22.—I met Peter Böhler once more. I had now no

objection to what he said of the nature of faith, namely, that it is (to use the words of our Church) "a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God." Neither could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described as fruits of this living faith. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," and "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," fully convinced me of the former, as "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin," and "Whosoever believeth is born of God," did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the Scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the Acts of the Apostles; but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous* conversions; scarce any so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but one retreat left, namely, "*Thus*, I grant God wrought in the *first* ages of Christianity; but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?"

But on Sunday, 23, I was beat out of this retreat, too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses, who testified God had thus wrought in themselves, giving them in a moment such a faith in the blood of his Son as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, "Lord, help thou my unbelief."

I asked P. Böhler again whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others. He said, "No; do not hide in the earth the talent God hath given you." Accordingly, on Tuesday, 25, I spoke clearly and fully at Blendon to Mr. Delamotte's family of the nature and fruits of faith. Mr. Broughton and my brother were there. Mr. Broughton's great objection was he could never think that I had not faith who had done and suffered such things. My brother was very angry, and told me I did not know what mischief I had done by talking thus. And, indeed, it did please God then to kindle a fire which, I trust, shall never be extinguished.

On Wednesday, 26, the day fixed for my return to Oxford, I once more waited on the trustees for Georgia; but, being strait-

ened for time, was obliged to leave the papers for them, which I had designed to give into their own hands. One of these was the instrument whereby they had appointed me minister of Savannah; which, having no more place in those parts, I thought it not right to keep any longer.

P. Böhler walked with me a few miles, and exhorted me not to stop short of the grace of God. At Gerad's Cross I plainly declared to those whom God gave into my hands the faith as it is in Jesus, as I did next day to a young man I overtook on the road, and in the evening to our friends at Oxford. A strange doctrine, which some who did not care to contradict, yet knew not what to make of; but one or two who were thoroughly bruised by sin willingly heard and received it gladly.

In the day or two following I was much confirmed in the "truth that is after godliness," by hearing the experiences of Mr. Hutchins, of Pembroke College, and Mrs. Fox, two living witnesses that God *can* (at least if he *does* not always) give that faith whereof cometh salvation in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven.

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 22-24.—I had continual sorrow and heaviness in my heart; something of which I described, in the broken manner I was able, in the following letter to a friend:

"O, why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God will use such an instrument as me! Lord, 'let the dead bury their dead!' But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt* send, and showest mercy by whom thou *wilt* show mercy! Amen! Be it then according to thy will! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.

"I feel what you say (though not enough), for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just, and good. I know every thought, every temper of my soul, ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I feel that 'I am sold under sin.' I know that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire; I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

"Yet I hear a voice (and is it not the voice of God?), saying,

‘Believe and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’

“O, let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith (that is, the proper Christian faith). By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel ‘peace with God,’ and ‘joy in the Holy Ghost?’ Does ‘his Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God?’ Alas, with mine, he does not. Nor, I fear, with yours. O, thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but thee! Draw us after thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing; and let nothing separate us from thy love in time or in eternity.”

What occurred on Wednesday, 24, I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood. Let him that cannot receive it ask of the Father of lights that he would give more light to him and me.

1. I believe till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that “washing of the Holy Ghost” which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved “by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God;” in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received, and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was, indeed, as ignorant of the true meaning of the law as I was of the Gospel of Christ.

2. The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was, 1. Not being so bad as other people. 2. Having still a kindness for religion. And 3. Reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers.

3. Being removed to the university for five years, I still said my prayers, both in public and in private, and read, with the Scriptures, several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as

a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and, for the most part, very contentedly, in some or other known sin; indeed, with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the Holy Communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call repentance.

4. When I was about twenty-two my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time, the providence of God directing me to Kempis's *Christian Pattern*, I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was, however, very angry at Kempis for being too strict; though I read him only in Dean Stanhope's translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before; and, meeting likewise with a religious friend which I never had till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and pray for, inward holiness. So that now, "doing so much, and living so good a life," I doubted not but I was a good Christian.

5. Removing soon after to another college, I executed a resolution which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins; I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by which I modeled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call*, although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet they convinced me more than ever of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him as I had never done before. And, by my continued endeavor to keep his whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power, I was persuaded that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

6. In 1730 I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and

sick in town, and doing what other good I could by my presence or my little fortune to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessities of life. I soon became a by-word for so doing, and I rejoiced that my name was cast out as evil. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday fasts, commonly observed in the ancient Church, tasting no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any further. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful: I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good: I for that reason suffered evil. And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly, this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when, after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprised; not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid" by God, "even Christ Jesus."

7. Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before that outward works are nothing, being alone; and in several conversations instructed me how to pursue inward holiness or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions (though I then received them as the words of God) I cannot but now observe, 1. That he spoke so incautiously against trusting in outward works that he discouraged me from doing them at all. 2. That he recommended (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul and uniting it with God. Now these were, in truth, as much my own works as visiting the sick or clothing the naked; and the union with God thus pursued was as really my own righteousness as any I had before pursued under another name.

8. In this refined way of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness (so zealously inculcated by the mystic writers), I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein till the time of my leaving England. On shipboard, however, I was again active in outward works, where it pleased God of his free mercy to give me twenty-six of the Moravian brethren for companions, who endeavored to show me "a more excellent way." But I un-

derstood it not at first. I was too learned and too wise. So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And I continued preaching and following after and trusting in that righteousness whereby no flesh can be justified.

9. All the time I was at Savannah I was thus beating the air. Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ which, by a living faith in him, bringeth salvation "to every one that believeth," I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so labored in the fire all my days. I was now properly "under the law;" I knew that "the law" of God was "spiritual; I consented to it, that it was good." Yea, "I delighted in it, after the inner man." Yet was I "carnal, sold under sin." Every day was I constrained to cry out, "What I do, I allow not: for what I would, I do not; but what I hate, that I do. To will is" indeed "present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a law that when I would do good evil is present with me:" even "the law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," and still "bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."

10. In this vile, abject state of bondage to sin, I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly; but still I served it. I fell and rose and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome, and in heaviness; sometimes I overcame, and was in joy. For as in the former state I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, which had now continued above ten years, I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble: I had many sensible comforts; which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still "under the law," not "under grace" (the state most who are called Christians are content to live and die in); for I was only striving with, not freed from, sin: neither had I the witness of the Spirit with my spirit, and indeed could not; for I "sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law."

11. In my return to England, January, 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief; and that the gaining a true, living faith was the "one thing needful" for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was wholly void of this faith; but only thought

I had not enough of it. So that when Peter Böhler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ (which is but one), that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, "Dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness," I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore, I disputed with all my might, and labored to prove that faith might be where these were not; especially where the sense of forgiveness was not: for all the Scriptures relating to this I had been long since taught to construe away; and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw, no one could, in the nature of things, have such a sense of forgiveness and not *feel* it. But I felt it not. If, then, there was no faith without this all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

12. When I met Peter Böhler again he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, namely, Scripture and experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavoring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, "that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those scriptures. Nor could I therefore allow it to be true till I found some living witnesses of it." He replied he could show me such at any time—if I desired it, the next day. And, accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified, of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present, sins. They added with one mouth that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end, 1. By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon *my own* works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. 2. By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a trust in him, as *my* Christ, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

13. I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indiffer-

ence, dullness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words, *Τα μεγιστα ημιν και τιμια επαγγελματα δεδωρηται, ινα γενησθε θειας κοινωνοι φυσεως*: "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should be partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Pet. i, 4). Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was, "Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with thee; therefore shalt thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins."

14. In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

15. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, "This cannot be faith; for where is thy joy?" Then was I taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but that, as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth them, according to the counsels of his own will.

16. After my return home I was much buffeted with temptations; but cried out, and they fled away. They returned again and again. I as often lifted up my eyes, and He "sent me help from his holy place." And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might, under the law as well as under grace. But then I was sometimes, if not often, conquered; now, I was always conqueror.

17. Thursday, 25.—The moment I awaked, “Jesus, Master,” was in my heart and in my mouth, and I found all my strength lay in keeping my eye fixed upon him, and my soul waiting on him continually. Being again at St. Paul’s in the afternoon, I could taste the good word of God in the anthem which began, “My song shall be always of the loving-kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be showing forth thy truth from one generation to another.” Yet the enemy injected a fear, “If thou dost believe, why is there not a more sensible change?” I answered (yet not I), “That I know not. But this I know, I have ‘now peace with God.’ And I sin not to-day, and Jesus my Master has forbid me to take thought for the morrow.”

THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

(Written April 5, 1762.)

1. A TRACT has lately been published in my name, concerning the imputed righteousness of Christ. This calls me to explain myself upon that head; which I will do with all the clearness I can. But I quarrel with no man for thinking or speaking otherwise than I do: I blame none for using those expressions which he believes to be scriptural. If he quarrels with me for not using them, at least not so frequently as himself, I can only pity him, and wish him more of “the mind which was in Christ.”

2. “The righteousness of Christ” is an expression which I do not find in the Bible. “The righteousness of God” is an expression which I do find there. I believe this means, first, the mercy of God, as 2 Pet. i, 1: “Them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God.” How does it appear that “the righteousness of God” here means either more or less than his mercy? “My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation;” thy mercy in delivering me. “I will make mention of thy righteousness only. Thy righteousness, O God, is very high” (Psa. lxxi, 15, etc.). Here the “righteousness of God” is expressly mentioned; but I will not take upon me to say that it means the righteousness or mercy of the Son any more than of the Holy Ghost.

3. I believe this expression means, secondly, God’s method of justifying sinners. So Rom. i, 17: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for therein is the righteousness of God,” his way

of justifying sinners, "revealed." "Now the righteousness of God is manifested; even the righteousness of God which is by faith" (unless righteousness here also means mercy); "Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of the sins that are past: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii, 21, etc.). "They, being ignorant of God's righteousness" (method of justifying sinners), "and going about to establish their own righteousness" (a method of their own opposite to his), "have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. x, 3).

4. Perhaps it has a peculiar meaning in 2 Cor. v, 21: "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in" (or through) "him;" that we might be justified and sanctified, might receive the whole blessing of God, through him.

5. And is not this the natural meaning of Phil. iii, 8, 9: "That I may win Christ, and be found with him," grafted into the true vine, "not having my own righteousness," the method of justification which I so long chose for myself, "which is of the law; but the righteousness which is of God," the method of justification which God hath chosen, "by faith?"

6. "But is not Christ termed 'our righteousness?'" He is: "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii, 6). And is not the plain, indisputable meaning of this Scripture, He shall be what he is called, the sole purchaser, the sole meritorious cause, both of our justification and sanctification?

7. Nearly related to this is the following text, "Christ Jesus, who is made of God, unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i, 30). And what does this prove but that he is made unto us righteousness, or justification, just as he is made unto us sanctification? In what sense? He is the sole Author of one as well as of the other, the Author of our whole salvation.

8. There seems to be something more implied in Rom. x, 3. Does it not imply thus much? "Christ is the end of the law"—not only of the Mosaic dispensation, but of the law of works, which was given to Adam in his original perfection—"for righteousness to every one that believeth;" to the end that "every one who believeth" in him, though he have not kept, and cannot keep, that law, may be both accounted and made righteous.

9. Accordingly, frequent mention is made in Scripture of "faith counted for righteousness." So Gen. xv, 6: "He" (Abraham) "believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness"—a text repeated, with but little variation, over and over in the New Testament: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv, 5). Thus it was that "Noah became heir of the righteousness," the justification "which is by faith" (Heb. xi, 7). Thus, also, "the Gentiles," when the Jews fell short, "attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith" (Rom. ix, 30). But that expression, "the righteousness of Christ," does not occur in any of these texts.

10. It seems righteousness in the following texts means neither more nor less than justification: "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. ii, 21). "If there had been a law which could have given life," spiritual life, or a title to life eternal, "verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. iii, 21); though some may think it here includes sanctification also, which it appears to do (Rev. xix, 8): "The fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

11. "But when St. Paul says (Rom. v. 18), 'By the righteousness of one' (called in the following verse, 'the obedience of one,' even his 'obedience unto death,' his dying for us), 'the free gift came,' does he not mean the righteousness of Christ?" Undoubtedly he does. But this is not the question. We are not inquiring what he means, but what he says. We are all agreed as to the meaning, but not as to the expression, "the imputing the righteousness of Christ;" which I still say, I dare not insist upon, neither require any one to use, because I cannot find it in the Bible. If any one can he has better eyes than me, and I wish he would show me where it is.

12. Now, if by "the righteousness of Christ" we mean any thing which the Scripture does not mean, it is certain we put darkness for the light. If we mean the same which the Scripture means by different expressions, why do we prefer this expression to the scriptural? Is not this correcting the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and opposing our own to the perfect knowledge of God?

13. I am myself the more sparing in the use of it because it has been so frequently and so dreadfully abused, and because the Antinomians use it at this day to justify the grossest abominations. And it is great pity that those who love, who preach, and follow after holiness should, under the notion of honoring Christ,

give any countenance to those who continually make him "the minister of sin," and so build on his righteousness as to live in such ungodliness and unrighteousness as is scarce named even among the heathens.

14. And doth not this way of speaking naturally tend to make Christ the minister of sin? For if the very personal obedience of Christ (as those expressions directly lead me to think) be mine the moment I believe, can any thing be added thereto? Does my obeying God add any value to the perfect obedience of Christ? On this scheme, then, are not the holy and unholy on the very same footing?

15. Upon the whole, I cannot express my thoughts better than in the words of that good man, Mr. Hervey: "If people may be safe, and their inheritance secure without any knowledge of these particularities, why should you offer to puzzle their heads with a few unnecessary terms? We are not very solicitous as to the credit or the use of any particular set of phrases. Only let men be humbled as repenting criminals at the Redeemer's feet; let them rely as devoted pensioner's on his precious merits, and they are undoubtedly in the way to a blissful immortality." (*Dialogues*, vol. i, p. 43. Dublin edition.)

A TREATISE ON BAPTISM.

(Written November 11, 1756.)

CONCERNING baptism, I shall inquire what it is, what benefits we receive by it, whether our Saviour designed it to remain always in his Church, and who are the proper subjects of it:

I. What it is. 1. It is the initiatory sacrament which enters us into covenant with God. It was instituted by Christ, who alone has power to institute a proper sacrament, a sign, seal, pledge, and means of grace, perpetually obligatory on all Christians. We know not, indeed, the exact time of its institution; but we know it was long before our Lord's ascension. And it was instituted in the room of circumcision. For, as that was a sign and seal of God's covenant, so is this.

2. The matter of this sacrament is water; which, as it has a natural power of cleansing, is the more fit for this symbolical use. Baptism is performed by washing, dipping, or sprinkling the person in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who is hereby

devoted to the ever-blessed Trinity. I say, *by washing, dipping, or sprinkling*; because it is not determined in Scripture in which of these ways it shall be done, neither by any express precept, nor by any such example as clearly proves it, nor by the force or meaning of the word *baptize*.

3. That there is no express precept all calm men allow. Neither is there any conclusive example. John's baptism in some things agreed with Christ's, in others differed from it. But it cannot be certainly proved from Scripture that even John's was performed by dipping. It is true, he baptized in Enon, near Salim, where there was much water. But this might refer to breadth rather than depth; since a narrow place would not have been sufficient for so great a multitude. Nor can it be proved that the baptism of our Saviour, or that administered by his disciples, was by immersion. No; nor that of the eunuch baptized by Philip, though "they both went down to the water;" for that going down may relate to the chariot, and implies no determinate depth of water. It might be up to their knees, it might not be above their ankles.

4. And as nothing can be determined from Scripture precept or example, so neither from the force or meaning of the word. For the words *baptize* and *baptism* do not necessarily imply *dipping*, but are used in other senses in several places. Thus we read that the Jews "were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x, 2); but they were not plunged in either. They could therefore be only sprinkled by drops of the sea-water, and refreshing dews from the cloud; probably intimated in that "Thou sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance, and refreshedst it when it was weary" (Psa. lxxviii, 9). Again: Christ said to his two disciples, "Ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with" (Mark x, 38); but neither he nor they were dipped, but only sprinkled or washed with their own blood. Again we read (Mark vii, 4) of the baptisms (so it is in the original) of pots and cups, and tables or beds. Now, pots and cups are not necessarily dipped when they are washed. Nay, the Pharisees washed the outsides of them only. And as for tables or beds, none will suppose they could be dipped. Here, then, the word *baptism*, in its natural sense, is not taken for dipping, but for washing or cleansing. And that this is the true meaning of the word *baptize* is testified by the greatest scholars and most proper judges in this matter. It is true, we read of being "buried with Christ in baptism." But nothing can be inferred

from such a figurative expression. Nay, if it held exactly it would make as much for sprinkling as for plunging; since in burying the body is not plunged through the substance of the earth, but rather earth is poured or sprinkled upon it.

5. And as there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture, so there is very probable proof of the contrary. It is highly probable the apostles themselves baptized great numbers, not by dipping, but by washing, sprinkling, or pouring water. This clearly represented the cleansing from sin, which is figured by baptism. And the quantity of water used was not material; no more than the quantity of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. The jailer "and all his house were baptized" in the prison; Cornelius with his friends (and so several households), at home. Now, is it likely that all these had ponds or rivers, in or near their houses, sufficient to plunge them all? Every unprejudiced person must allow the contrary is far more probable. Again: three thousand at one time, and five thousand at another, were converted and baptized by St. Peter at Jerusalem; where they had none but the gentle waters of Siloam, according to the observation of Mr. Fuller: "There were no water-mills in Jerusalem, because there was no stream large enough to drive them." The place, therefore, as well as the number, makes it highly probable that all these were baptized by sprinkling or pouring, and not by immersion. To sum up all, the manner of baptizing (whether by dipping or sprinkling) is not determined in Scripture. There is no command for one rather than the other. There is no example from which we can conclude for dipping rather than sprinkling. There are probable examples of both, and both are equally contained in the natural meaning of the word.

II. What are the benefits we receive by baptism is the next point to be considered. 1. And the first of these is the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death. That we are all born under the guilt of Adam's sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery, was the unanimous sense of the ancient Church, as it is expressed in the ninth article of our own. And the Scripture plainly asserts that we were "shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us;" that "we were all by nature children of wrath, and dead in trespasses and sins;" that "in Adam all die;" that "by one man's disobedience all were made sinners;" that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; which came upon all men, because all had sinned." This plainly includes infants; for

they too die; therefore they have sinned: but not by actual sin; therefore by original; else what need have they of the death of Christ? Yea, "death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned" actually "according to the similitude of Adam's transgression." This, which can relate to infants only, is a clear proof that the whole race of mankind are obnoxious both to the guilt and punishment of Adam's transgression. But "as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, to justification of life." And the virtue of this free gift, the merits of Christ's life and death, are applied to us in baptism. "He gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. v, 25, 26); namely, in baptism, the ordinary instrument of our justification. Agreeably to this, our Church prays in the baptismal office that the person to be baptized may be "washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and, being delivered from God's wrath, receive remission of sins, and enjoy the everlasting benediction of his heavenly washing;" and declares in the rubric at the end of the office, "It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are saved." And this is agreeable to the unanimous judgment of all the ancient fathers.

2. By baptism we enter into covenant with God; into that everlasting covenant which he hath commanded for ever (Psa. cxi, 9); that new covenant, which he promised to make with the spiritual Israel; even to "give them a new heart and a new spirit, to sprinkle clean water upon them" (of which the baptismal is only a figure), "and to remember their sins and iniquities no more;" in a word, to be their God, as he promised to Abraham, in the evangelical covenant which he made with him and all his spiritual offspring (Gen. xvii, 7, 8). And as circumcision was then the way of entering into this covenant, so baptism is now; which is therefore styled by the apostle (so many good interpreters render his words) "the stipulation, contract, or covenant of a good conscience with God."

3. By baptism we are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head. The Jews were admitted into the Church by circumcision, so are the Christians by baptism. For "as many as are baptized into Christ," in his name, "have" thereby "put on Christ" (Gal. iii, 27); that is, are mystically united to Christ, and made one with him. For

“by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body” (1 Cor. xii, 13), namely, the Church, “the body of Christ” (Eph. iv, 12). From which spiritual, vital union with him proceeds the influence of his grace on those that are baptized, as from our union with the Church, a share in all its privileges, and in all the promises Christ has made to it.

4. By baptism we, who were “by nature children of wrath,” are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our Church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith; being “grafted into the body of Christ’s Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.” This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John iii, 5). By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again; whence it is also called by the apostle “the washing of regeneration.” Our Church, therefore, ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ himself has done. Nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which, added thereto, makes it a sacrament. Herein a principle of grace is infused which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long-continued wickedness.

5. In consequence of our being made children of God, we are heirs of the kingdom of heaven. “If children” (as the apostle observes), “then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Herein we receive a title to, and an earnest of, “a kingdom which cannot be moved.” Baptism doth now save us, if we live answerable thereto; if we repent, believe, and obey the Gospel, supposing this, as it admits us into the Church here, so into glory hereafter.*

III. 1. But did our Saviour design this should remain always in his Church? This is the third thing we are to consider. And this may be dispatched in a few words, since there can be no reasonable doubt but it was intended to last as long as the Church into which it is the appointed means of entering. In the

* That Mr. Wesley, as a clergyman of the Church of England, was originally a *high churchman*, in the fullest sense, is well known. When he wrote this treatise, in the year 1756, he seems still to have used some expressions, in relation to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which we at this day should not prefer. Some such, in the judgment of the reader, may perhaps be found under this second head. This last sentence, however, contains a guarded corrective. It explains also the sense in which we believe Mr. Wesley intended much of what goes before to be understood.

ordinary way there is no other means of entering into the Church or into heaven.

2. In all ages the outward baptism is a means of the inward, as outward circumcision was of the circumcision of the heart. Nor would it have availed a Jew to say, "I have the inward circumcision, and therefore do not need the outward too:" that soul was to be cut off from his people. He had despised, he had broken, God's everlasting covenant by despising the seal of it (Gen. xvii, 14). Now, the seal of circumcision was to last among the Jews as long as the law lasted, to which it obliged them. By plain parity of reason, baptism, which came in its room, must last among Christians as long as the Gospel covenant into which it admits, and whereunto it obliges, all nations.

3. This appears also from the original commission which our Lord gave to his apostles: "Go, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them. And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Now, as long as this commission lasted, as long as Christ promised to be with them in the execution of it, so long doubtless were they to execute it, and to baptize as well as to teach. But Christ hath promised to be with them, that is, by his Spirit, in their successors to the end of the world. So long, therefore, without dispute, it was his design that baptism should remain in his Church.

IV. 1. But the grand question is, Who are the proper subjects of baptism? grown persons only, or infants also? In order to answer this fully, I shall, first, lay down the grounds of infant baptism, taken from Scripture, reason, and primitive, universal practice; and, secondly, answer the objections against it.

2. As to the grounds of it: if infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man; and that hereby they are children of wrath, and liable to external damnation. It is true, the second Adam has found a remedy for the disease which came upon all by the offense of the first. But the benefit of this is to be received through the means which he hath appointed; through baptism in particular, which is the ordinary means he hath appointed for that purpose, and to which God hath tied us, though he may not have tied himself. Indeed, where it cannot be had, the case is different; but extraordinary cases do not

make void a standing rule. This, therefore, is our first ground. Infants need to be washed from original sin; therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism.

3. Secondly. If infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant, then they have a right to baptism, which is the entering seal thereof. But infants are capable of making a covenant, and were and still are under the evangelical covenant.

The custom of nations and common reason of mankind prove that infants may enter into a covenant, and may be obliged by compacts made by others in their name, and receive advantage by them. But we have stronger proof than this, even God's own word: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord; your captains, with all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives, and the stranger; that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxix, 10-12). Now, God would never have made a covenant with little ones if they had not been capable of it. It is not said children only, but little children, the Hebrew word properly signifying infants. And these may be still, as they were of old, obliged to perform, in aftertime, what they are not capable of performing at the time of their entering into that obligation.

4. The infants of believers, the true children of faithful Abraham, always were under the gospel covenant. They were included in it, they had a right to it, and to the seal of it, as an infant heir has a right to his estate, though he cannot yet have actual possession. The covenant with Abraham was a gospel covenant; the condition the same, namely, faith, which the apostle observes was "imputed unto him for righteousness." The inseparable fruit of this faith was obedience; for by faith he left his country, and offered his son. The benefits were the same; for God promised, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee." And he can promise no more to any creature; for this includes all blessings, temporal and eternal. The Mediator is the same; for it was in his Seed, that is, in Christ (Gen. xxii, 18; Gal. iii, 16), that all nations were to be blessed; on which very account the apostle says, "The Gospel was preached unto Abraham" (Gal. iii, 8). Now, the same promise that was made to him, the same covenant that was made with him, was made "with his children after him" (Gen. xvii, 7; Gal. iii, 7). And upon that account it is called "an everlasting covenant." In this covenant children were also obliged to what they knew not, to

the same faith and obedience with Abraham. And so they are still, as they are still equally entitled to all the benefits and promises of it.

5. Circumcision was then the seal of the covenant; which is itself therefore figuratively termed *the covenant* (Acts vii, 8). Hereby the children of those who professed the true religion were then admitted into it, and obliged to the conditions of it; and when the law was added, to the observance of that also. And when the old seal of circumcision was taken off, this of baptism was added in its room, our Lord appointing one positive institution to succeed another. A new seal was set to Abraham's covenant; the seals differed, but the deed was the same; only that part was struck off which was political or ceremonial. That baptism came in the room of circumcision appears as well from the clear reason of the thing as from the apostle's argument, where, after circumcision, he mentions baptism as that wherein God had "forgiven us our trespasses;" to which he adds, the "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances," plainly relating to circumcision and other Jewish rites; which as fairly implies that baptism came in the room of circumcision as our Saviour's styling the other sacrament *the passover* (Col. ii, 11-13; Luke xxii, 15) shows that it was instituted in the place of it. Nor is it any proof that baptism did not succeed circumcision because it differs in some circumstances, any more than it proves the Lord's Supper did not succeed the passover because in several circumstances it differs from it. This then is a second ground. Infants are capable of entering into covenant with God. As they always were, so they still are, under the evangelical covenant. Therefore, they have a right to baptism, which is now the entering seal thereof.

6. Thirdly. If infants ought to come to Christ, if they are capable of admission into the Church of God, and, consequently, of solemn sacramental dedication to him, then they are proper subjects of baptism. But infants are capable of coming to Christ, of admission into the Church, and solemn dedication to God.

That infants ought to come to Christ appears from his own words: "They brought little children to Christ, and the disciples rebuked them. And Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xix, 13, 14). St. Luke expresses it still more strongly: "They brought unto him even infants, that he might

touch them" (xviii, 15). These children were so little that they were *brought* to him; yet he says, "Suffer them to *come* unto me." So little that he "took them up in his arms;" yet he rebukes those who would have hindered their coming to him. And his command respected the future as well as the present. Therefore, his disciples or ministers are still to suffer infants to come that is, to be brought, unto Christ. But they cannot now come to him unless by being brought into the Church, which cannot be but by baptism. Yea, and "of such," says our Lord, "is the kingdom of heaven;" not of such only as were like these infants. For if they themselves were not fit to be subjects of that kingdom, how could others be so, because they were like them? Infants, therefore, are capable of being admitted into the Church, and have a right thereto. Even under the Old Testament they were admitted into it by circumcision. And can we suppose they are in a worse condition under the Gospel than they were under the law? and that our Lord would take away any privileges which they then enjoyed? Would he not rather make additions to them? This, then, is a third ground. Infants ought to come to Christ, and no man ought to forbid them. They are capable of admission into the Church of God. Therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism.

7. Fourthly. If the apostles baptized infants, then are they proper subjects of baptism? But the apostles baptized infants, as is plain from the following consideration: the Jews constantly baptized as well as circumcised all infant proselytes. Our Lord, therefore, commanding his apostles to proselyte or disciple all nations by baptizing them, and not forbidding them to receive infants as well as others, they must needs baptize children also.

That the Jews admitted proselytes by baptism, as well as by circumcision, even whole families together, parents and children, we have the unanimous testimony of their most ancient, learned, and authentic writers. The males they received by baptism and circumcision, the women by baptism only. Consequently, the apostles, unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it, would of course do the same thing.

Indeed, the consequence would hold from circumcision only. For if it was the custom of the Jews, when they gathered proselytes out of all nations, to admit children into the Church by circumcision, though they could not actually believe the law or obey it, then the apostles, making proselytes to Christianity by baptism, could never think of excluding children, whom the Jews

always admitted (the reason for their admission being the same), unless our Lord had expressly forbidden it. It follows, the apostles baptized infants. Therefore, they are proper subjects of baptism.

8. If it be objected, "There is no express mention in Scripture of any infants whom the apostles baptized," I would ask, Suppose no mention had been made in the Acts of those two women baptized by the apostles, yet might we not fairly conclude that when so many thousands, so many entire households, were baptized, women were not excluded, especially since it was the known custom of the Jews to baptize them? The same holds of children; nay, more strongly, on the account of circumcision. Three thousand were baptized by the apostles in one day, and five thousand in another. And can it be reasonably supposed that there were no children among such vast numbers? Again: The apostles baptized many families; nay, we hardly read of one master of a family who was converted and baptized, but his whole family (as was before the custom among the Jews) were baptized with him; thus the "jailer's household, he and all his; the household of Caius, of Stephanus, of Crispus." And can we suppose that in all these households, which, we read, were without exception baptized, there should not be so much as one child or infant? But to go one step farther: St. Peter says to the multitude, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins. For the promise is unto you, and to your children" (Acts ii, 38, 39). Indeed, the answer is made directly to those who asked, "What shall we do?" But it reaches farther than to those who asked the question. And though children could not actually repent, yet they might be baptized. And that they are included appears, (1) Because the apostle addresses to "every one" of them, and in "every one" children must be contained. (2) They are expressly mentioned: "The promise is unto you, and to your children."

9. Lastly. If to baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian Church in all places and in all ages, then this must have been the practice of the apostles, and, consequently, the mind of Christ. But to baptize infants has been the general practice of the Christian Church, in all places and in all ages. Of this we have unexceptional witnesses: St. Austin for the Latin Church, who flourished before the year 400, and Origen for the Greek, born in the second century; both declaring not only that the whole Church of Christ did then baptize infants,

but likewise that they received this practice from the apostles themselves. (*August. de Genesi*, l. 10, c. 23; *Orig. in Rome*, vi.) St. Cyprian likewise is express for it, and the whole council with him. (*Epist. ad Fidum*.) If need were we might cite likewise Athanasius, Chrysostom, and a cloud of witnesses. Nor is there one instance to be found in all antiquity of any orthodox Christian who denied baptism to children when brought to be baptized; nor any one of the fathers or ancient writers, for the first eight hundred years at least, who held it unlawful. And that it has been the practice of all regular Churches ever since is clear and manifest. Not only our own ancestors when first converted to Christianity, not only all the European Churches, but the African too, and the Asiatic, even those of St. Thomas in the Indies, do, and ever did, baptize their children. The fact being thus cleared, that infant baptism has been the general practice of the Christian Church in all places and in all ages, that it has continued without interruption in the Church of God for above seventeen hundred years, we may safely conclude it was handed down from the apostles, who best knew the mind of Christ.

10. To sum up the evidence: If outward baptism be generally, in an ordinary way, necessary to salvation, and infants may be saved as well as adults, nor ought we to neglect any means of saving them; if our Lord commands such to come, to be brought unto him, and declares, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven;" if infants are capable of making a covenant or having a covenant made for them by others, being included in Abraham's covenant (which was a covenant of faith, an evangelical covenant), and never excluded by Christ; if they have a right to be members of the Church, and were accordingly members of the Jewish; if, suppose our Lord had designed to exclude them from baptism, he must have expressly forbidden his apostles to baptize them (which none dares to affirm he did), since otherwise they would do it of course, according to the universal practice of their nation; if it is highly probable they did so, even from the letter of Scripture, because they frequently baptized whole households, and it would be strange if there were no children among them; if the whole Church of Christ, for seventeen hundred years together, baptized infants and were never opposed till the last century but one, by some not very holy men in Germany; lastly, if there are such inestimable benefits conferred in baptism, the washing away the guilt of original sin, the engrafting us into Christ by making us members of his Church, and thereby giving us a right to all

the blessings of the Gospel, it follows that infants may, yea, ought to be baptized, and that none ought to hinder them.

I am, in the last place, to answer those objections which are commonly brought against infant baptism:

1. The chief of these is: "Our Lord said to his apostles, 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matt. xxviii, 19). Here Christ himself put teaching before baptizing. Therefore, infants, being incapable of being taught, are incapable of being baptized."

I answer: (1) The order of words in Scripture is no certain rule for the order of things. We read in St. Mark i, 4: "John baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance;" and (verse 5) "They were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Now, either the order of words in Scripture does not always imply the same order of things, or it follows that John baptized before his hearers either confessed or repented. But (2) the words are manifestly mistranslated. For if we read, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them—teaching them to observe all things," it makes plain tautology, vain and senseless repetition. It ought to be translated (which is the literal meaning of the words), "Go and make disciples of all nations by baptizing them." That infants are capable of being made proselytes or disciples has been already proved; therefore, this text, rightly translated, is no valid objection against infant baptism.

2. Their next objection is: "The Scripture says, 'Repent and be baptized;' believe and be baptized. Therefore, repentance and faith ought to go before baptism. But infants are incapable of these; therefore, they are incapable of baptism." •

I answer: Repentance and faith were to go before circumcision as well as before baptism. Therefore, if this argument held, it would prove just as well that infants were incapable of circumcision. But we know God himself determined the contrary, commanding them to be circumcised at eight days old. Now, if infants were capable of being circumcised, notwithstanding that repentance and faith were to go before circumcision in grown persons, they are just as capable of being baptized; notwithstanding that repentance and faith are, in grown persons, to go before baptism. The objection, therefore, is of no force, for it is as strong against circumcision of infants as infant baptism.

3. It is objected, thirdly, "There is no command for it in Scripture. Now, God was angry with his own people, because

they did that which, he said, 'I commanded them not' (Jer. vii, 31). One plain text would end all the dispute."

I answer: (1) We have reason to fear it would not. It is as positively commanded in a very plain text of Scripture that we should "teach and admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with grace in our hearts" (Eph. v, 19), as it is to honor our father and mother. But does this put an end to all dispute? Do not these very persons absolutely refuse to do it, notwithstanding a plain text, an express command?

I answer: (2) They themselves practice what there is neither express command nor clear example for in Scripture. They have no express command for baptizing women. They say, indeed, "Women are implied in 'all nations.'" They are; and so are infants, too; but the command is not express for either. And for admitting women to the Lord's Supper they have neither express command nor clear example. Yet they do it continually, without either one or the other. And they are justified therein by the plain reason of the thing. This also justifies us in baptizing infants, though without express command or clear example.

If it be said, "But there is a command, 'Let a man,' *ανθρωπος*, 'examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread' (1 Cor. vi, 28); the word 'man' in the original signifying indifferently either men or women:" I grant it does in other places; but here the word "himself," immediately following, confines it to men only. "But women are implied in it, though not expressed." Certainly; and so are infants in "all nations."

"But we have Scripture example for it; for it is said in the Acts, 'The apostles continued in prayer and supplication with the women.'" True; in prayer and supplication; but it is not said, "in communing," nor have we one clear example of it in the Bible.

Since, then, they admit women to the communion without any express command or example, but only by consequence from Scripture, they can never show reason why infants should not be admitted to baptism when there are so many Scriptures which by fair consequence show they have a right to it, and are capable of it.

As for the texts wherein God reproves his people for doing "what he commanded them not," that phrase evidently means what he had forbidden, particularly in that passage of Jeremiah. The whole verse is, "They have built the high places of Tophet,

to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not." Now, God had expressly forbidden them to do this, and that on pain of death. But surely there is a difference between the Jews offering their sons and daughters to devils and Christians offering theirs to God.

On the whole, therefore, it is not only lawful and innocent, but meet, right, and our bounden duty in conformity to the uninterrupted practice of the whole Church of Christ from the earliest ages, to consecrate our children to God by baptism, as the Jewish Church were commanded to do by circumcision.

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

(Written about 1746.)

1. MANY large volumes have been already published on this important subject. But the very length of them makes them hard to be understood or even purchased by common readers. A short, plain treatise on this head is what serious men have long desired, and what is here offered to those whom God has endowed with love and meekness of wisdom.

2. By *the saints* I understand those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant; those to whom all or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term *saints*.

3. Can any of these fall away? By *falling away* we mean not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted, they may. But can they fall totally? Can any of these so fall from God as to perish everlastingly?

4. I am sensible either side of this question is attended with great difficulties, such as reason alone could never remove. Therefore, "to the law and to the testimony." Let the living oracles

decide, and if these speak for us we neither seek nor want farther witness.

5. On this authority I believe a saint may fall away; that one who is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

I. For thus saith the Lord: "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die" (Ezek. xviii, 24).

That this is to be understood of eternal death appears from the twenty-sixth verse: "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them" (here is temporal death); "for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die" (here is death eternal).

It appears farther from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (verse 4).

If you say, "The soul here means the body," I answer, that will die whether you sin or no.

6. Again thus saith the Lord: "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness" (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional), "and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for the iniquity that he hath committeth shall he die" (xxxiii, 13).

Again: "When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby" (verse 18).

Therefore, one who is holy and righteous in the judgment of God himself may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

7. "But how is this consistent with what God declared elsewhere: 'If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, I will visit their offenses with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. I have sworn once by my holiness that I will not fail David'" (Psa. lxxxix, 30-35).

I answer: There is no manner of inconsistency between one declaration and the other. The prophet declares the just judgment of God against every righteous man who falls from his righteousness. The psalmist declares his old loving-kindness which God sware unto David in his truth. "I have found," saith he, "David, my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him. My hand shall hold him fast, and my arm shall strengthen him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as

the days of heaven" (verses 20, 21, 29). It follows: "But if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail. My covenant will I not break. I will not fail David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me" (verse 30, etc.).

May not every man see that the covenant here spoken of relates wholly to David and his seed or children? Where, then, is the inconsistency between the most absolute promise made to a particular family, and that solemn account which God has here given of his way of dealing with all mankind?

Besides, the very covenant mentioned in these words is not absolute, but conditional. The condition of repentance in case of forsaking God's law was implied, though not expressed; and so strongly implied that, this condition failing, not being performed, God did also fail David. He did "alter the thing that had gone out of his lips," and yet without any impeachment of his truth. He "abhorred and forsook his anointed" (verse 38), the seed of David, whose throne, if they had repented, should have been "as the days of heaven." He did "break the covenant of his servant, and cast his crown to the ground" (verse 39). So vainly are these words of the psalmist brought to contradict the plain, full testimony of the prophet!

8. Nor is there any contradiction between this testimony of God by Ezekiel and those words which he spake by Jeremiah: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." For do these words assert that no righteous man ever turns from his righteousness? No such thing. They do not touch the question, but simply declare God's love to the Jewish Church. To see this in the clearest light you need only read over the whole sentence: "At the same time, saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the Lord, the people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I caused him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me," saith the prophet, speaking in the person of Israel, "saying, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel" (xxxix, 1-4).

Suffer me here to observe, once for all, a fallacy which is constantly used by almost all writers on this point. They perpetually beg the question by applying to particular persons assertions or

prophecies which relate only to the Church in general, and some of them only to the Jewish Church and nation, as distinguished from all other people.

If you say, "But it was particularly revealed to me that God had loved me with an everlasting love," I answer : Suppose it was (which might bear a dispute); it proves no more, at the most, than that you in particular shall persevere, but does not affect the general question, whether others shall or shall not.

II. 9. One who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired apostle : "War a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck" (1 Tim. i, 18, 19).

Observe, (1) These men (such as Hymeneus and Alexander) had once the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, which they once had, or they could not have "put it away."

Observe, (2) They made "shipwreck" of the faith, which necessarily implies the total and final loss of it. For a vessel once wrecked can never be recovered. It is totally and finally lost.

And the apostle himself, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, mentions one of these two as irrecoverably lost. "Alexander," says he, "did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works" (2 Tim. iv, 14). Therefore, one who is endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

10. "But how can this be reconciled with the words of our Lord, 'He that believeth shall be saved?'"

Do you think these words mean, "he that believes" at this moment "shall" certainly and inevitably "be saved?"

If this interpretation be good, then, by all the rules of speech, the other part of the sentence must mean, "He" that does "not believe" at this moment "shall" certainly and inevitably "be damned."

Therefore, that interpretation cannot be good. The plain meaning then of the whole sentence is, "He that believeth," if he continue in faith, "shall be saved; he that believeth not," if he continue in unbelief, "shall be damned."

11. "But does not Christ say elsewhere, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life?' (John iii, 36) and, 'He that believeth on

him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life?" (John v, 24).

I answer, (1) The love of God is everlasting life. It is in substance the life of heaven. Now, every one that believes loves God, and therefore "hath everlasting life."

(2) Every one that believes "is" therefore "passed from death," spiritual death, "unto life;" and,

(3) "Shall not come into condemnation," if he endureth in the faith unto the end: according to our Lord's own words, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved," and, "Verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John viii, 51).

III. 12. Those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle: "Some of the branches be broken off, and thou art grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Be not high minded, but fear: if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off" (Rom. xi, 17, 20-22).

We may observe here: (1) The persons spoken to were actually grafted into the olive-tree.

(2) This olive-tree is not barely the outward visible Church, but the invisible, consisting of holy believers. So the text: "If the first-fruit be holy, the lump is holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches" (verse 16). And, "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith."

(3) These holy believers were still liable to be cut off from the invisible Church into which they were then grafted.

(4) Here is not the least intimation of those who were so cut off being ever grafted in again.

Therefore, those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

13. "But how does this agree with the twenty-ninth verse, 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance?'"

The preceding verse shows: "As touching the election" (the unconditional election of the Jewish nation), "they are beloved for the fathers' sake;" for the sake of their forefathers. It follows (in proof of this, that "they are beloved for the fathers' sake," that God has still blessings in store for the Jewish nation):

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;” for God doth not repent of any blessings he hath given them, or any privileges he hath called them to. The words here referred to were originally spoken with a peculiar regard to these national blessings. “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent” (Num. xxiii, 19).

14. “But do you not hereby make God changeable? Whereas ‘with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning’” (Jas. i, 17). By no means. God is unchangeably holy; therefore, he always “loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity.” He is unchangeably good; therefore, he pardoneth all that “repent and believe the Gospel.” And he is unchangeably just; therefore, he “rewardeth every man according to his works.” But all this hinders not his resisting when they are proud, those to whom he gave grace when they were humble. Nay, his unchangeableness itself requires that if they grow high-minded God should cut them off; that there should be a proportionable change in all the divine dispensations toward them.

15. “But how then is God faithful?” I answer: In fulfilling every promise which he hath made to all to whom it is made, all who fulfill the condition of that promise. More particularly: (1) “God is faithful” in that “he will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear” (1 Cor. x, 13). (2) “The Lord is faithful, to establish and keep you from evil” (if you put your trust in him); from all the evil which you might otherwise suffer through “unreasonable and wicked men” (2 Thess. iii, 2, 3). “Quench not the Spirit. Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And your whole spirit, soul, and body shall be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thess. v, 19, etc.). (4) Be not disobedient unto the heavenly calling; and “God is faithful, by whom ye were called, to confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. i, 8, 9). Yet, notwithstanding all this, unless you fulfill the condition you cannot attain the promise.

“Nay, but are not ‘all the promises yea and amen?’” They are firm as the pillars of heaven. Perform the condition, and the promise is sure. Believe, and thou shalt be saved.

“But many promises are absolute and unconditional.” In many the condition is not expressed. But this does not prove there is none implied. No promises can be expressed in a more absolute form than those above cited from the eighty-ninth Psalm. And

yet we have seen a condition was implied even there, though none was expressed.

16. "But there is no condition, either expressed or implied, in those words of St. Paul: 'I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'" (Rom. viii, 38, 39).

Suppose there is not (which will bear a dispute), yet what will this prove? Just thus much—that the apostle was at that time fully persuaded of his own perseverance. And I doubt not but many believers at this day have the very same persuasion, termed in Scripture "The full assurance of hope." But this does not prove that every believer shall persevere, any more than that every believer is thus fully persuaded of his perseverance.

IV. 17. Those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," may, nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith our blessed Lord himself, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John xv, 1-6).

Here we may observe: (1) The persons spoken of were in Christ, branches of the true vine. (2) Some of these branches abide not in Christ, but the Father taketh them away. (3) The branches which abide not are cast forth, cast out from Christ and his Church. (4) They are not only cast forth, but withered; consequently, never grafted in again; nay, (5) They are not only cast forth and withered, but also cast into the fire; and (6) They are burned. It is not possible for words more strongly to declare that even those who are now branches in the true vine may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

18. By this clear, indisputable declaration of our Lord we may interpret those which might be otherwise liable to dispute; wherein it is certain, whatever he meant beside, he did not mean to contradict himself. For example: "This is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing." Most sure; all that God hath given him; or, as it is expressed in the next verse, "Every one which believeth on him," namely, to the end, he "will raise up at the last day," to reign with him forever.

Again: "I am the living bread: if any man eat of this bread"

(by faith), "he shall live forever" (John vi, 51). True; if he continue to eat thereof. And who can doubt of it?

Again: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand" (John x, 27-29).

In the preceding text the condition is only implied; in this it is plainly expressed. They are my sheep that hear my voice, that follow me in all holiness. And "if ye do those things, ye shall never fall." None shall "pluck you out of my hands."

Again: "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John xiii, 1). "Having loved his own," namely, the apostles (as the very next words, "which were in the world," evidently show), "he loved them unto the end" of his life, and manifested that love to the last.

19. Once more: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one" (John xvii, 11).

Great stress has been laid upon this text, and it has been hence inferred that all those whom the Father had given him (a phrase frequently occurring in this chapter) must infallibly persevere to the end.

And yet, in the very next verse, our Lord himself declares that one of those whom the Father had given him did not persevere unto the end, but perished everlastingly.

His own words are: "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (John xvii, 12).

So one even of these was finally lost! a demonstration that the phrase, "those whom thou hast given me," signifies here (if not in most other places too) the twelve apostles, and them only.

20. On this occasion I cannot but observe another common instance of begging the question, of taking for granted what ought to be proved. It is usually laid down as an indisputable truth that whatever our Lord speaks to or of his apostles is to be applied to all believers. But this cannot be allowed by any who impartially search the Scriptures. They cannot allow, without clear and particular proof, that any one of those texts which related primarily to the apostles (as all men grant) belong to any but them.

V. 21. Those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the apostle Peter: "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the

world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ " (the only possible way of escaping them), "they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them " (2 Pet. ii, 20, 21).

That the knowledge of the way of righteousness which they had attained was an inward, experimental knowledge is evident from that other expression, they had "escaped the pollutions of the world;" an expression parallel to that in the preceding chapter, verse 4: "Having escaped the corruption which is in the world." And in both chapters this effect is ascribed to the same cause; termed in the first, "the knowledge of Him who hath called us to glory and virtue;" in the second, more explicitly, "the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And yet they lost that experimental knowledge of Christ and the way of righteousness; they fell back into the same pollutions they had escaped, and were "again entangled therein and overcome." They "turned from the holy commandment delivered to them," so that their "latter end was worse than their beginning."

Therefore, those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world may yet fall back into those pollutions, and perish everlastingly.

22. And this is perfectly consistent with St. Peter's words in the first chapter of his former epistle: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Undoubtedly; so are all they who ever attain eternal salvation. It is the power of God only, and not our own, by which we are kept one day or one hour.

VI. 23. Those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and the fruits of the Spirit, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the inspired writer to the Hebrews: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. vi, 4, 6).

Must not every unprejudiced person see the expressions here used are so strong and clear that they cannot, without gross and palpable wresting, be understood of any but true believers?

They "were once enlightened;" an expression familiar with the apostle, and never by him applied to any but believers. So,

"The God of our Lord Jesus Christ give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward that believe" (Eph. i, 17-19). So again: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv, 6). This a light which no unbelievers have. They are utter strangers to such enlightening. "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (verse 4).

"They had tasted of the heavenly gift" (emphatically so-called), "and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." So St. Peter likewise couples them together: "Be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii, 38); whereby the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, with all the other fruits of the Spirit. Yea, it is remarkable that our Lord himself, in his grand commission to St. Paul (to which the apostle probably alludes in these words), comprises all these three particulars. "I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (here contracted into that one expression, "they were enlightened"), "that they may receive forgiveness of sins" ("the heavenly gift"), "and an inheritance among them which are sanctified" (Acts xxvi, 18); which are made "partakers of the Holy Ghost," of all the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

The expression, "They tasted of the heavenly gift," is taken from the psalmist, "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psa. xxxiv, 8). As if he had said, Be ye as assured of his love, as of any thing you see with your eyes. And let the assurance thereof be sweet to your soul as honey is to your tongue.

And yet those who had been thus "enlightened," had "tasted" this "gift," and been thus "partakers of the Holy Ghost," so "fell away" that it was "impossible to renew them again to repentance."

"But the apostle makes only a supposition, 'If they shall fall away.'"

I answer, The apostle makes no supposition at all. There is no *if* in the original. The words are, *Αδυνατον τους απαξ φωτισθεντας, και παραπεσοντας*; that is in plain English, "It is impossible to renew again unto repentance those who were once enlightened and have fallen away;" therefore, they must perish everlastingly.

24. "But if so, then farewell all my comfort."

Then your comfort depends on a poor foundation. My comfort stands not on any opinion, either that a believer can or cannot fall away; not on the remembrance of any thing wrought in me yesterday, but what is to-day; on my present knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling me to himself; on my now beholding the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; walking in the light as he is in the light, and having fellowship with the Father and with the Son. My comfort is that through grace I now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that his Spirit doth bear witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. I take comfort in this and this only, that I see Jesus at the right hand of God; that I personally for myself, and not for another, have a hope full of immortality; that I feel the love of God shed abroad in my heart, being crucified to the world, and the world crucified to me. My rejoicing is this, the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have my conversation in the world.

Go and find, if you can, a more solid joy, a more blissful comfort, on this side heaven. But this comfort is not shaken, be that opinion true or false; whether the saints in general can or cannot fall.

If you take up with any comfort short of this, you lean on the staff of a broken reed, which not only will not bear your weight, but will enter into your hand and pierce you.

VII. 25. Those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

For thus saith the same inspired writer: "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. x. 38). "The just," the justified person, "shall live by faith;" even now shall he live the life which is hid with Christ in God, and if he endure unto the end, he shall live with God forever. "But if any man draw back," saith the Lord, "my soul shall have no pleasure in him;" that is, I will utterly cast him off; and, accordingly, the drawing back here spoken of is termed, in the verse immediately following, "drawing back to perdition."

"But the person supposed to draw back is not the same with him that is said to live by faith."

I answer: (1) Who is it then? Can any man draw back from faith who never came to it? But,

(2) Had the text been fairly translated, there had been no pretense for this objection. For the original runs thus : *Ο δικαίος εκ πίστεως ζήσεται· και εαν υποσειληται.* If *ο δικαίος*, "the just man that lives by faith" (so the expression necessarily implies, there being no other nominative of the verb) "draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

"But the apostle adds: 'We are not of them who draw back unto perdition.'" And what will you infer from thence? This is so far from contradicting what has been observed before that it manifestly confirms it. It is a farther proof that there are those "who draw back unto perdition," although the apostle was not of that number. Therefore, those who live by faith may yet fall from God, and perish everlastingly.

26. "But does not God say to every one that lives by faith, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?'"

The whole sentence runs thus: "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." True; provided "your conversation be without covetousness," and ye "be content with such things as ye have." Then you may "boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Do you not see (1) that this promise, as here recited, relates wholly to temporal things? (2) That, even thus taken, it is not absolute, but conditional? And (3) that the condition is expressly mentioned in the very same sentence?

VIII. 27. Those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

For thus again saith the apostle: "If we sin willfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing!" (Heb. x. 26-29.)

It is undeniably plain (1) that the person mentioned here was once sanctified by the blood of the covenant; (2) That he afterward, by known, willful sin, trod under foot the Son of God; and (3) That he hereby incurred a sorer punishment than death, namely, death everlasting.

Therefore, those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant may yet so fall as to perish everlastingly.

28. "What! Can the blood of Christ burn in hell? Or can the purchase of the blood of Christ go thither?"

I answer: (1) The blood of Christ cannot burn in hell, no more than it can be spilled on the earth. The heavens must contain both his flesh and blood until the restitution of all things. But,

(2) If the oracles of God are true, one who was purchased by the blood of Christ may go thither. For he that was sanctified by the blood of Christ was purchased by the blood of Christ. But one who was sanctified by the blood of Christ may, nevertheless, go to hell; may fall under that fiery indignation which shall forever devour the adversaries.

29. "Can a child of God then go to hell? Or can a man be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow? If God is our Father once, is he not our Father always?"

I answer: (1) A child of God, that is, a true believer (for he that believeth is born of God), while he continues a true believer, cannot go to hell. But (2) if a believer make shipwreck of the faith, he is no longer a child of God. And then he may go to hell; yea, and certainly will if he continues in unbelief. (3) If a believer may make shipwreck of a faith, then a man that believes now may be an unbeliever some time hence; yea, very possibly, to-morrow; but, if so, he who is a child of God to-day may be a child of the devil to-morrow. For (4) God is the Father of them that believe, so long as they believe. But the devil is the father of them that believe not, whether they did once believe or no.

30. The sum of all is this: If the Scriptures are true, those who are holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself; those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, that produces a good conscience; those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible Church; those who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" those who so effectually know Christ as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and of the fruits of the Spirit; those who live by faith in the Son of God; those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may nevertheless so fall from God as to perish everlastingly.

Therefore, let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

(AS TAUGHT BY MR. WESLEY FROM THE YEAR 1725 TO THE YEAR 1777.)*

1. WHAT I purpose in the following papers is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind, those who desire to know all "the truth as it is in Jesus." And these only are concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavoring all along to show, from one period to another, both what I thought and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's *Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying*. In reading several parts of this book I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts and words and actions; being thoroughly convinced there was no medium, but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God or myself—that is, in effect, to the devil.

Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1726 I met with Kempis's *Christian's Pattern*. The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this and go no farther) would profit me nothing unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart, to him.

I saw that "simplicity of intention and purity of affection," one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed the "wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

4. A year or two after Mr. Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call* were put into my hands. These convinced me more than ever of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I determined, through His grace (the absolute necessity of

* It is not to be understood that Mr. Wesley's sentiments concerning Christian Perfection were in any measure changed after the year 1777. This tract underwent several revisions and enlargements during his life-time; and in every successive edition the date of the most recent revision was specified. The last revision appears to have been made in the year 1777; and since that period this date has been generally continued on the title-page of the several editions of the pamphlet.—EDITOR.

which I was deeply sensible of), to be all devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance.

Will any considerate man say that this is carrying matters too far, or that any thing less is due to Him who has given himself for us than to give him ourselves, all we have, and all we are?

FIRST STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE.

5. In the year 1729 I began not only to read but to study the Bible as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw in a clearer and clearer light the indispensable necessity of having "the mind which was in Christ," and of "walking as Christ also walked;" even of having not some part only, but all the mind which was in him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light wherein at this time I generally considered religion as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of any thing more than of bending this rule to the experience of myself or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

6. On January 1, 1733, I preached before the university, in St. Mary's Church, on "The Circumcision of the Heart," an account of which I gave in these words: "It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness, and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;' and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so 'renewed in the image of our mind' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.'" (Works, Vol. i, p. 148.)

In the same sermon I observed: "'Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.' It is not only 'the first and great' command, but all the commandments in one. 'Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,' they are all comprised in this one word, love. In this is perfection and glory and happiness; the royal law of heaven and earth is this, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.' The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake—the fruition of Him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls, even a union with him that made them, the having 'fellowship with the Father and the Son,' the being 'joined to the Lord in one spirit.' One design ye are to pursue to the end of time—the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things, so far as they tend to this; love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection and thought and word and action be subordinate to this, Whatever ye desire or

fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end, as well as source, of your being." (*Ibid.*, pp. 150, 151.)

I concluded in these words: "Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. Other sacrifices from us he would not, but the living sacrifice of the heart hath he chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him, for he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another; he will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked who being dead still speak to us: 'Desire not to live, but to praise his name; let all your thoughts, words, and works tend to his glory.' 'Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to him that you may love nothing but for his sake.' 'Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions.' 'For then, and not till then, is that mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus, when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands we pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his pleasure;' when we, too, neither think, nor speak, nor act to fulfill 'our own will, but the will of him that sent us;' when, 'whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do,' we do it all to the 'glory of God.'" (*Ibid.*, p. 153.)

It may be observed this sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to term *perfection*. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution. And what is there here which any man of understanding who believes the Bible can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scripture? What retrench, without taking from the word of God?

7. In the same sentiment did my brother and I remain (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed *Methodists*) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Savannah, that I wrote the following lines:

Is there a thing beneath the sun,
That strives with thee my heart to share?
Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,
The Lord of every motion there!

In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul
May dwell, but thy pure love alone!
O may thy love possess my whole,
My joy, my treasure, and my crown!
Strange fires far from my heart remove;
My every act, word, thought, be love!

I never heard that any one objected to this. And, indeed, who can object? Is not this the language, not only of every believer, but of every one that is truly awakened? But what have I wrote to this day which is either stronger or plainer?

8. In August following I had a long conversation with Arvid Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience I desired him to give me, in writing, a definition of "the full assurance of faith," which he did in the following words:

Requies in sanguine Christi ; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratiâ divinâ ; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax ; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.

"Repose in the blood of Christ ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favor ; the highest tranquillity, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins."

This was the first account I ever heard from any living man of what I had before learned myself from the oracles of God, and had been praying for (with the little company of my friends) and expecting for several years.

THE VOLUME OF HYMNS.

9. In 1739 my brother and I published a volume of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly. Thus :

Turn the full stream of nature's tide ;
Let all our actions tend
To Thee, their source ; thy love the guide,
Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be ;
Sense shall point out the road ;
The creatures all shall lead to thee,
And all we taste be God.

Again :

Lord, arm me with thy Spirit's might,
Since I am call'd by thy great name :
In thee my wand'ring thoughts unite,
Of all my works be thou the aim :
Thy love attend me all my days,
And my sole business be thy praise.

Again :

Eager for thee I ask and pant,
So strong the principle divine,
Carries me out with sweet constraint,
Till all my hallow'd soul be thine ;
Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in thine immensity !

Once more:

Heavenly Adam, life divine,
Change my nature into thine;
Move and spread throughout my soul,
Actuate and fill the whole.

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect, but these are sufficient to show beyond contradiction what our sentiments then were.

THE FIRST TRACT.

10. The first tract I ever wrote expressly on this subject was published in the latter end of this year. That none might be prejudiced before they read it, I give it the indifferent title of *The Character of a Methodist*. In this I described a perfect Christian, placing in the front, "Not as though I had already attained." Part of it I subjoin without any alteration.

"A Methodist is one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart and the desire of his soul, which is continually crying, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee.' My God and my all! 'Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy, as having in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love having now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore. Yea, his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again unto a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for me.'

"And he who hath this hope, thus full of immortality, in every thing giveth thanks, as knowing this (whatsoever it is) is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him. From him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying, 'Good is the will of the Lord;' and whether he giveth or taketh away, equally blessing the name of the Lord. Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of the heart to him who orders it for good; into whose hands he hath wholly committed his body and soul, 'as into the hands of a faithful Creator.' He is, therefore, anxiously 'careful for nothing,' as having 'cast all his care on him that careth for him;' and 'in all things' resting on him, after 'making' his 'request known to him with thanksgiving.'

"For, indeed, he 'prays without ceasing;' at all times the language of his heart is this, 'Unto thee is my mouth, though without a voice; and my silence speaketh unto thee.' His heart is lifted up to God at all times and in all places. In this he is never hindered, much less interrupted, by any person or thing. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, 'God is in all his thoughts;' he walks with God continually; having the loving eye of his soul fixed on him, and every-where 'seeing him that is invisible.'

"And, loving God, he 'loves his neighbor as himself;' he loves every man as his own soul. He loves his enemies; yea, and the enemies of God. And if it be not

in his power to 'do good to them that hate' him, yet he ceases not to 'pray for them,' though they spurn his love and still despitefully use him, and persecute him.'

"For he is 'pure in heart.' Love has purified his heart from envy, malice, wrath, and every unkind temper. It has cleansed him from pride, whereof 'only cometh contention;' and he hath now 'put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.' And, indeed, all possible ground for contention on his part is cut off. For none can take from him what he desires, seeing he 'loves not the world, nor any of the things of the world;' but 'all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of his name.'

"Agreeable to this his one desire is the one design of his life, namely, 'to do not his own will, but the will of him that sent him.' His one intention at all times and in all places is not to please himself, but him whom his soul loveth. He hath a single eye, and because his 'eye is single, his whole body is full of light. The whole is light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house.' God reigns alone; all that is in the soul is 'holiness to the Lord.' There is not a motion in his heart but is according to his will. Every thought that arises points to him, and is in 'obedience to the law of Christ.'

"And the tree is known by its fruits. For, as he loves God, so he 'keeps his commandments;' not only some or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to 'keep the whole law and offend in one point,' but has in all points 'a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man.' Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God has enjoined, he does. 'He runs the way of God's commandments,' now he hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory and joy so to do; it is his daily crown of rejoicing 'to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven.'

"All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might; for his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And, therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength; he continually presents his soul and 'body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;' entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has he constantly employs according to his Master's will; every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body.

"By consequence, 'whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God.' In all his employments of every kind he not only aims at this, which is implied in having a single eye, but actually attains it; his business and his refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve to this great end. Whether he 'sit in the house or walk by the way,' whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life. Whether he put on his apparel, or labor, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God by peace and good-will among men. His one invariable rule is this: 'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, through him.'

"Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his 'running the race which is set before him,' He cannot, therefore, 'lay up treasures upon earth,' no more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot speak evil of his neighbor any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one, for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot 'speak idle words; no corrupt conversation' ever 'comes out of his mouth;' as is all that is not 'good to the use of edifying,' nor fit to 'minister grace to the hearers.' But 'whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are' justly 'of good

report,' he thinks, speaks, and acts, 'adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.'"

These are the very words wherein I largely declared for the first time my sentiments of Christian perfection. And is it not easy to see, (1) That this is the very point at which I aimed all along from the year 1725; and more determinately from the year 1730, when I began to be *homo unius libri*, "a man of one book," regarding none, comparatively, but the Bible? Is it not easy to see, (2) That this is the very same doctrine which I believe and teach at this day; not adding one point, either to that inward or outward holiness which I maintained eight-and-thirty years ago? And it is the same which, by the grace of God, I have continued to teach from that time till now, as will appear to every impartial person from the extracts subjoined below.

11. I do not know that any writer has made any objection against that tract to this day; and for some time I did not find much opposition upon the head; at least, not from serious persons. But after a time a cry arose, and, what a little surprised me, among religious men, who affirmed, not that I stated perfection wrong, but that "there is no perfection on earth;" nay, and fell vehemently on my brother and me for affirming the contrary. We scarce expected so rough an attack from these, especially as we were clear on justification by faith, and careful to ascribe the whole of salvation to the mere grace of God. But what most surprised us was that we were said to "dishonor Christ" by asserting that he "saveth to the uttermost;" by maintaining he will reign in our hearts alone and subdue all things to himself.

THE FIRST SERMON.

12. I think it was in the latter end of the year 1740 that I had a conversation with Dr. Gibson, then Bishop of London, at Whitehall. He asked me what I meant by perfection. I told him without any disguise or reserve. When I ceased speaking he said: "Mr. Wesley, if this be all you mean, publish it to all the world. If any one then can confute what you say, he may have free leave." I answered: "My lord, I will;" and accordingly wrote and published the sermon on Christian perfection.

In this I endeavored to show, (1) In what sense Christians are not: (2) In what sense they are, perfect:

"(1) In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities,

such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behavior. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation, for 'the servant is not above his master.' But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which does not admit of a continual increase.

"(2) In what sense, then, are they perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly, and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence that 'all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.'

"But does not the Scripture say, 'A just man sinneth seven times a day?' It does not. Indeed, it says, 'A just man falleth seven times.' But this is quite another thing; for, first, the words *a day* are not in the text. Secondly, here is no mention of *falling into sin* at all. What is here mentioned is *falling into temporal affliction*.

"But elsewhere Solomon says, 'There is no man that sinneth not.' Doubtless thus it was in the days of Solomon; yea, and from Solomon to Christ there was then no man that sinned not. But whatever was the case of those under the law, we may safely affirm with St. John that, since the Gospel was given, 'he that is born of God sinneth not.'

"The privileges of Christians are in no wise to be measured by what the Old Testament records concerning those who were under the Jewish dispensation; seeing the fullness of time is now come, the Holy Ghost is now given, the great salvation of God is now brought to men by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of heaven is now set up on earth, concerning which the Spirit of God declared of old time (so far is David from being the pattern or standard of Christian perfection), 'He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as the angel of the Lord before them' (Zech. xii, 8).

"But the apostles themselves committed sin; Peter by dissembling, Paul by his sharp contention with Barnabas. Suppose they did, will you argue thus: 'If two of the apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians, in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live?' Nay, God forbid we should thus speak. No necessity of sin was laid upon them; the grace of God was surely sufficient for them. And it is sufficient for us at this day.

"But St. James says, 'In many things we offend all.' True; but who are the persons here spoken of? Why, those many masters or teachers whom God had not sent; not the apostle himself, nor any real Christian. That in the word *we*, used by a figure of speech, common in all other as well as the inspired writings, the apostle could not possibly include himself or any other true believer, appears, first, from the ninth verse: 'Therewith bless we God, and therewith curse we men.' Surely not we apostles! not we believers! Secondly, from the words preceding the text: 'My brethren, be not many masters,' or teachers, 'knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all.' *We!* Who? Not the apostles nor true believers, but they who were to 'receive the greater condemnation,' because of those many offenses. Nay, thirdly, the verse itself proves that 'we offend all' cannot be spoken either of all men or all Christians. For in it im-

mediately follows the mention of a man who 'offends not,' as the *we* first mentioned did; from whom, therefore, he is professedly contradistinguished and pronounced a 'perfect man.'

"But St. John himself says, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;' and, 'If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.'

"I answer: (1) The tenth verse fixes the sense of the eighth: 'If we say we have no sin,' in the former, being explained by, 'If we say we have not sinned,' in the latter verse. (2) The point under consideration is not whether we have or have not sinned heretofore; and neither of these verses asserts that we do sin or commit sin now. (3) The ninth verse explains both the eighth and tenth: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' As if he had said, 'I have before affirmed, the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.' And no man can say, 'I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed from.' 'If we say we have no sin,' that 'we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves,' and make God a liar; but 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just,' not only 'to forgive us our sins,' but also 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' that we may 'go and sin no more.' In conformity, therefore, both to the doctrine of St. John and the whole tenor of the New Testament, we fix this conclusion: A Christian is so far perfect as not to commit sin.

"This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can be affirmed they are in such a sense perfect, as, secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed, whence should they spring? 'Out of the heart of man,' if at all, 'proceed evil thoughts.' If, therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it; for 'a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.'

"And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so likewise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say with St. Paul, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;' words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, 'I live not,' my evil nature, the body of sin, is destroyed; and positively, 'Christ liveth in me,' and therefore all that is holy and just and good. Indeed, both these, 'Christ liveth in me' and 'I live not,' are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?

"He, therefore, who liveth in these Christians hath 'purified their hearts by faith; insomuch that every one that has Christ in him, 'the hope of glory, purifieth himself even as he is pure.' He is purified from pride, for Christ was lowly in heart; he is pure from desire and self-will, for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father; and he is pure from anger, in the common sense of the word, for Christ was meek and gentle. I say *in the common sense of the word*, for he is angry at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a displacency at every offense against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

"Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins; not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. 'True,' say some; 'but not till death, not in this world.' Nay, St. John says, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.' The apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms that, not only at or after death, but 'in this world,' they are 'as their Master.'

"Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter : 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' And again : 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Now, it is evident the apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world ; for he saith not, The blood of Christ *will* cleanse (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment), but it 'cleanseth,' at the time present, us living Christians 'from all sin.' And it is equally evident that if any sin remain we are not cleansed from all sin. If *any* unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness. Neither let any say that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin : First, because this is confounding together what the apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions, first, 'to forgive us our sins,' and then, to 'cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works in the strongest sense possible ; it is making all inward as well as all outward holiness necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of sin, then we are not cleansed from guilt—that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking 'in the light, as he is in the light.' It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness ; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers."

It could not be but that a discourse of this kind, which directly contradicted the favorite opinion of many who were esteemed by others, and possibly esteemed themselves, some of the best of Christians (whereas, if these things were so they were not Christians at all), should give no small offense. Many answers or animadversions, therefore, were expected ; but I was agreeably disappointed. I do not know that any appeared, so I went quietly on my way.

THE SECOND VOLUME OF HYMNS.

13. Not long after, I think in the spring, 1741, we published a second volume of hymns. As the doctrine was still much misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented, I judged it needful to explain yet farther upon the head, which was done in the preface to it, as follows :

"This great gift of God, the salvation of our souls, is no other than the image of God fresh stamped on our hearts. It is a 'renewal of believers in the spirit of their minds, after the likeness of him that created them.' God hath now laid 'the ax unto the root of the tree, purifying their hearts by faith,' and 'cleansing all the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit.' Having this hope, that they shall see God as he is, they 'purify themselves even as he is pure,' and are 'holy, as he that hath called them is holy, in all manner of conversation.' Not that they have already attained all that they shall attain, either are already in this sense perfect. But they daily 'go on from strength to strength ; beholding'

now, 'as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.'

"And 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;' such liberty 'from the law of sin and death' as the children of this world will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. 'The Son hath made them free' who are thus 'born of God,' from that great root of sin and bitterness, pride. They feel that all their 'sufficiency is of God,' that it is he alone who 'is in all their thoughts,' and 'worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' They feel that 'it is not they' that 'speak, but the Spirit of' their 'Father who speaketh' in them, and that whatsoever is done by their hands, 'the Father who is in them, he doeth the works.' So that God is to them all in all, and they are nothing in his sight. They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God; not supplies in want, not ease in pain,* nor life, or †death, or any creature; but continually crying in their inmost soul, 'Father, thy will be done.' They are freed from evil thoughts, so that they cannot enter into them, no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in they looked up, and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this in a soul which is full of God. They are free from wanderings in prayer. Whosoever they pour out their hearts in a more immediate manner before God, they have no thought of any thing past ‡ or absent or to come, but of God alone. In times past they had wandering thoughts darted in, which yet fled away like smoke; but now that smoke does not rise at all. They have no fear or doubt, either as to their state in general, or as to any particular action. § The 'unction from the Holy One' teacheth them every hour what they shall do, and what they shall speak; ¶ nor, therefore, have they any need to reason concerning it. || They are in one sense freed from temptations; for though numberless temptations fly about them, yet they trouble them not. ¶¶ At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable. Their peace, flowing as a river, 'passeth all understanding,' and they 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' For they 'are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption,' having the witness in themselves that 'there is laid up for' them a 'crown of righteousness, which the Lord will give' them 'in that day.'**

"Not that every one is a child of the devil till he is thus renewed in love; on the contrary, whoever has 'a suré confidence in God that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven,' he is a child of God, and, if he abide in him, an heir of all the promises. Neither ought he in any wise to cast away his confidence, or to deny the faith he has received, because it is weak, or because it is 'tried with fire, so that his soul is 'in heaviness through manifold temptations.'

"Neither dare we affirm, as some have done, that all this salvation is given at once. There is, indeed, an instantaneous as well as a gradual work of God in his children; and there wants not, we know, a cloud of witnesses who have received in one moment either a clear sense of the forgiveness of their sins or the abiding witness of the Holy Spirit. But we do not know a single instance, in any place, of a person's receiving in one and the same moment remission of sins, the abiding witness of the Spirit, and a new, clean heart.

* This is too strong. Our Lord himself desired ease in pain. He asked for it, only with resignation: "Not as I will," I desire, "but as thou wilt."

† This is far too strong. See the sermon on "Wandering Thoughts."

‡ Frequently this is the case; but only for a time.

§ For a time it may be so; but not always.

|| Sometimes they have no need; at other times they have.

¶ Sometimes they do not; at other times they do, and that grievously.

** Not all who are saved from sin; many of them have not attained it yet.

"Indeed, how God may work, we cannot tell; but the general manner wherein he does work is this: those who once trusted in themselves that they were righteous, that they were rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, are, by the Spirit of God applying his word, convinced that they are poor and naked. All the things that they have done are brought to their remembrance and set in array before them, so that they see the wrath of God hanging over their heads, and feel that they deserve the damnation of hell. In their trouble they cry unto the Lord, and he shows them that he hath taken away their sins, and opens the kingdom of heaven in their hearts, 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Sorrow and pain are fled away, and 'sin has no more dominion over' them. Knowing they are justified freely through faith in his blood, they 'have peace with God through Jesus Christ;' they 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God,' and 'the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts.'

"In this peace they remain for days or weeks or months, and commonly suppose they shall not know war any more; till some of their old enemies, their bosom sins, or the sin which did most easily beset them (perhaps anger or desire), assault them again, and thrust sore at them, that they may fall. Then arises fear that they shall not endure to the end; and often doubt, whether God has not forgotten them, or whether they did not deceive themselves in thinking their sins were forgiven. Under these clouds, especially if they reason with the devil, they go mourning all the day long. But it is seldom long before their Lord answers for himself, sending them the Holy Ghost to comfort them, to bear witness continually with their spirits that they are the children of God. Then they are indeed meek and gentle and teachable, even as a little child. And now first do they see the ground of their heart,* which God before would not disclose unto them, lest the soul should fail before him, and the spirit which he had made. Now they see all the hidden abominations there, the depths of pride, self-will, and hell; yet having the witness in themselves, 'Thou art an heir of God, a joint heir with Christ, even in the midst of this fiery trial;' which continually heightens both the strong sense they then have of their inability to help themselves, and the inexpressible hunger they feel after a full renewal in his image, in 'righteousness and true holiness.' Then God is mindful of the desire of them that fear him, and gives them a single eye and a pure heart; he stamps upon them his own image and superscription; he createth them anew in Christ Jesus; he cometh unto them with his Son and blessed Spirit, and, fixing his abode in their souls, bringeth them into the 'rest which remaineth for the people of God.'"

Here I cannot but remark, (1) That this is the strongest account we ever gave of Christian perfection; indeed, too strong in more than one particular, as is observed in the notes annexed. (2) That there is nothing which we have since advanced upon the subject, either in verse or prose, which is not either directly or indirectly contained in this preface. So that whether our present doctrine be right or wrong, it is, however, the same which we taught from the beginning.

14. I need not give additional proofs of this by multiplying

* Is it not astonishing that, while this book is extant, which was published four-and-twenty years ago, any one should face me down that this is a new doctrine, and what I never taught before?—[This note was first published in the year 1765.—EDITOR.]

quotations from the volume itself. It may suffice to cite part of one hymn only, the last in that volume :

LORD, I believe a rest remains,
To all thy people known ;
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
And thou art loved alone ;

A rest where all our soul's desire
Is fixed on things above ;
Where doubt and pain and fear expire,
Cast out by perfect love.

From every evil motion freed
(The Son hath made us free),
On all the powers of hell we tread,
In glorious liberty.

Safe in the way of life, above
Death, earth, and hell we rise ;
We find, when perfected in love,
Our long-sought paradise.

O, that I now the rest might know,
Believe and enter in !

Now, Saviour, now the power bestow,
And let me cease from sin !

Remove this hardness from my heart,
This unbelief remove :
To me the rest of faith impart,
The sabbath of thy love.

Come, O my Saviour, come away !
Into my soul descend !
No longer from thy creature stay,
My author and my end.

The bliss thou hast for me prepared,
No longer be delay'd :
Come, my exceeding great reward,
For whom I first was made.

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
And seal me thine abode !
Let all I am in thee be lost :
Let all be lost in God !

Can any thing be more clear than, (1) That here also is as full and high a salvation as we have ever spoken of ? (2) That this is spoken of as receivable by mere faith, and as hindered only by unbelief ? (3) That this faith, and consequently the salvation which it brings, is spoken of as given in an instant ? (4) That it is supposed that instant may be now ? that we need not stay another moment ? that "now," the very "now is the accepted time ? now is the day of" this full "salvation ?" And, lastly, that, if any speak otherwise, he is the person that brings new doctrine among us ?

THE THIRD VOLUME OF HYMNS.

15. About a year after, namely, in the year 1742, we published another volume of hymns. The dispute being now at the height, we spoke upon the head more largely than ever before. Accordingly, abundance of the hymns in this volume treat expressly on this subject. And so does the preface, which, as it is short, it may not be amiss to insert entire:

"(1) Perhaps the general prejudice against Christian perfection may chiefly arise from a misapprehension of the nature of it. We willingly allow, and continually declare, there is no such perfection in this life as implies either a dispensa-

tion from doing good, and attending all the ordinances of God, a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, and a thousand infirmities necessarily connected with flesh and blood.

"(2) First. We not only allow, but earnestly contend, that there is no perfection in this life which implies any dispensation from attending all the ordinances of God, or from doing good unto all men while we have time, though 'especially unto the household of faith.' We believe that not only the babes in Christ, who have newly found redemption in his blood, but those also who are 'grown up into perfect men,' are indispensably obliged, as often as they have opportunity, 'to eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of him,' and to 'search the Scriptures;' by fasting, as well as temperance, to 'keep their bodies under, and bring them into subjection;' and, above all, to pour out their souls in prayer, both secretly and in the great congregation.

"(3) We secondly believe that there is no such perfection in this life as implies an entire deliverance, either from ignorance or mistake in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities, wherewith the corruptible body more or less presses down the soul. We cannot find any ground in Scripture to suppose that any inhabitant of a house of clay is wholly exempt either from bodily infirmities or from ignorance of many things; or to imagine any is incapable of mistake or falling into divers temptations.

"(4) But whom then do you mean by 'one that is perfect?' We mean one in whom is 'the mind which was in Christ,' and who so 'walketh as Christ also walked;' a man 'that hath clean hands and a pure heart,' or that is 'cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;' one in whom is 'no occasion of stumbling,' and who, accordingly, 'does not commit sin.' To declare this a little more particularly: We understand by that scriptural expression, 'a perfect man,' one in whom God hath fulfilled his faithful word, 'From all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.' We understand hereby one whom God hath 'sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit;' one who 'walketh in the light as he is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ his Son having cleansed him from all sin.'

"(5) This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ in me.' He is 'holy as God who called' him 'is holy,' both in heart and 'in all manner of conversation.' He 'loveth the Lord his God with all his heart,' and serveth him 'with all his strength.' He 'loveth his neighbor,' every man 'as himself;' yea, 'as Christ loveth us;' them, in particular, that 'despitefully use him and persecute him, because they know not the Son, neither the Father.' Indeed, his soul is all love, filled with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering.' And his life agreeth thereto, full of 'the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labor of love.' 'And whatsoever' he 'doeth either in word or deed,' he 'doeth it all in the name,' in the love and power, 'of the Lord Jesus.' In a word, he doeth 'the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven.'

"(6) This it is to be a perfect man, to be 'sanctified throughout;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God' (to use Archbishop Usher's words) 'as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to 'show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.' O, that both we and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity may thus 'be made perfect in one!'"

This is the doctrine which we preached from the beginning, and which we preach at this day. Indeed, by viewing it in every point of light, and comparing it again and again with the word of God on the one hand, and the experience of the children of God on the other, we saw further into the nature and properties of Christian perfection. But still there is no contrariety at all between our first and our last sentiments. Our first conception of it was, it is to have "the mind which was in Christ," and to "walk as he walked;" to have all the mind that was in him, and always to walk as he walked; in other words, to be inwardly and outwardly devoted to God; all devoted in heart and life. And we have the same conception of it now, without either addition or diminution.

16. The hymns concerning it in this volume are too numerous to transcribe. I shall only cite a part of three :

SAVIOUR from sin, I wait to prove
That Jesus is thy healing name;
To lose when perfected in love,
Whate'er I have, or can, or am;
I stay me on thy faithful word,
"The servant shall be as his Lord."

Answer that gracious end in me
For which thy precious life was given;
Redeem from all iniquity,
Restore, and make me meet for heaven.
Unless thou purge my every stain,
Thy suffering and my faith is vain.

Didst thou not die, that I might live,
No longer to myself but thee?
Might, body, soul, and spirit give
To Him who gave himself for me?
Come, then, my Master and my God,
Take the dear purchase of thy blood.

Thy own peculiar servant claim,
For thy own truth and mercy's sake;
Hallow in me thy glorious name;
Me for thine own this moment take;
And change and thoroughly purify;
Thine only may I live and die.

CHOSE from the world, if now I stand,
Adorn'd with righteousness divine;
If, brought into the promised land,
I justly call the Saviour mine;

The sanctifying Spirit pour,
To quench my thirst and wash me clean;
Now, Saviour, let the gracious shower
Descend, and make me pure from sin.

Purge me from every sinful blot:
My idols all be cast aside:
Cleanse me from every evil thought,
From all the filth of self and pride.

The hatred of the carnal mind
Out of my flesh at once remove:
Give me a tender heart, resign'd,
And pure, and full of faith and love.

O, that I now, from sin releas'd,
Thy word might to the utmost prove,
Enter into thy promised rest;
The Canaan of thy perfect love!

Now let me gain perfection's height!
Now let me into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in my sight,
And feel that Christ is all in all.

LORD, I believe thy work of grace
Is perfect in the soul:
His heart is pure who sees thy face,
His spirit is made whole.

From every sickness, by thy word,
From every foul disease,
Saved, and to perfect health restored,
To perfect holiness:

He walks in glorious liberty,
To sin entirely dead:
The Truth, the Son hath made him free,
And he is free indeed.

Throughout his soul thy glory shines,
His soul is all renew'd,
And deck'd in righteousness divine,
And clothed and fill'd with God.

This is the rest, the life, the peace,
Which all thy people prove;

Love is the bond of perfectness,
And all their soul is love.

O joyful sound of gospel grace!
Christ shall in me appear;
I, even I, shall see his face,
I shall be holy here!

He visits now the house of clay,
He shakes his future home;
O, wouldst thou, Lord, on this glad day,
Into thy temple come!

Come, O my God, thyself reveal,
Fill all this mighty void;
Thou only canst my spirit fill:
Come, O my God, my God!

Fulfill, fulfill my large desires,
Large as infinity!
Give, give me all my soul requires,
All, all that is in thee!

THE CONFERENCE CONVERSATIONS.

17. On Monday, June 25, 1744, our first Conference began; six clergymen and all our preachers being present. The next morning we seriously considered the doctrine of sanctification, or perfection. The questions asked concerning it, and the substance of the answers given, were as follows:

“QUESTION. What is it to be sanctified?”

“ANSWER. To be renewed in the image of God, ‘in righteousness and true holiness.’

“Q. What is implied in being a perfect Christian?”

“A. The loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul (Deut. vi, 5).

“Q. Does this imply that all inward sin is taken away?”

“A. Undoubtedly; or how can we be said to be ‘saved from all our uncleanness?’ (Ezek. xxxvi, 29.)

Our second Conference began August 1, 1745. The next morning we spoke of sanctification, as follows:

“QUESTION. When does inward sanctification begin?”

“ANSWER. In the moment a man is justified. (Yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout.) From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

“Q. Is this ordinarily given till a little before death?”

“A. It is not to those who expect it no sooner.

“Q. But may we expect it sooner?”

“A. Why not? For, although we grant, (1) That the generality of believers, whom we have hitherto known, were not so sanctified till near death; (2) that few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his epistles were so at that time; nor, (3) he him-

self at the time of writing his former epistles ; yet all this does not prove that we may not be so to-day.

“Q. In what manner should we preach sanctification ?

“A. Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward ; to those who are always by way of promise ; always drawing, rather than driving.”

Our third Conference began Tuesday, May 26, 1746.

In this we carefully read over the minutes of the two preceding Conferences, to observe whether any thing contained therein might be intrenched or altered on more mature consideration. But we did not see cause to alter in any respect what we had agreed upon before.

Our fourth Conference began on Tuesday, June 16, 1747. As several persons were present who did not believe the doctrine of perfection, we agreed to examine it from the foundation.

In order to this it was asked,

“How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification ?

“ANSWER. They grant, (1) That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death. (2) That till then a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection. (3) That we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do.

“Q. What do we allow them ?

“A. We grant, (1) That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love till a little before their death. (2) That the term *sanctified* is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified. (3) That by this term alone he rarely, if ever, means, ‘saved from all sin.’ (4) That, consequently, it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word *wholly, entirely*, or the like. (5) That the inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified, but very rarely of or to those who were wholly sanctified.* (6) That, consequently, it behooves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification ; but more rarely,† ‘at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.’

“Q. What then is the point where we divide ?

“A. It is this : Should we expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death ?

“Q. Is there any clear Scripture promise of this—that God will save us from all sin ?

“A. There is : ‘He shall redeem Israel from all his sins’ (Psalm cxxx, 8).

“This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezekiel : ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you : I will also save you from all your uncleannesses’ (xxxvi, 25, 29). No promise can be more clear. And to this the apostle plainly refers in that exhortation : ‘Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God’ (2 Cor. vii, 1).

* That is, unto those alone, exclusive of others ; but they speak to them, jointly with others, almost continually.

† More rarely, I allow ; but yet in some places very frequently, strongly and explicitly.

Equally clear and express is that ancient promise: 'The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul' (Deut. xxx, 6).

"Q. But does any assertion answerable to this occur in the New Testament?

"A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So 1 John iii, 8: 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil;' the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction; but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is the assertion of St. Paul: 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blemish' (Eph. v, 25, 27).

"And to the same effect is his assertion in the eighth chapter of Romans, verses 3, 4: 'God sent his Son, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'

"Q. Does the New Testament afford any farther ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

"A. Undoubtedly it does; both in those prayers and commands, which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

"Q. What prayers do you mean?

"A. Prayers for entire sanctification; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such in particular are: (1) 'Deliver us from evil.' Now, when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. (2) 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one' (John xvii, 20-23). (3) 'I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God' (Eph. iii, 14, etc.). (4) 'The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Thess. v, 23).

"Q. What command is there to the same effect?

"A. (1) 'Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect' (Matt. v, 48). (2) 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind' (Matt. xxii, 37). But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin therein.

"Q. But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

"A. (1) From the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead, but to the living. Therefore, 'Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,' cannot mean, 'Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but, while thou livest.'

"(2) From express texts of Scripture: (i) 'The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, having renounced ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works' (Titus ii, 11-14). (ii) 'He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers; the oath which he

sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life' (Luke i, 69, etc.).

"Q. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who had attained to this?

"A. Yes; St. John, and all those of whom he says, 'Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world' (1 John iv, 17).

"Q. Can you show one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

"A. To some that make this inquiry, one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell you; for you do not inquire out of love. You are like Herod; you only seek the young child to slay it.

"But more directly we answer, There are many reasons why there should be few, if any, indisputable examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at! And how unprofitable would it be to gainsayers! 'For if they hear not Moses and the prophets,' Christ and his apostles, 'neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead?'

"Q. Are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?

"A. It is very possible we may, and that upon several grounds; partly from a concern for the good of souls, who may be hurt if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainment than our own; and partly from our natural slowness and unreadiness of heart to believe the works of God.

"Q. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith till we are perfected in love?

"Why indeed? since holy grief does not quench this joy; since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable."

From these extracts it undeniably appears, not only what was mine and my brother's judgment, but what was the judgment of all the preachers in connection with us, in the years 1744, 1745, 1746, and 1747. Nor do I remember that, in any one of these Conferences, we had one dissenting voice; but whatever doubts any one had when we met, they were all removed before we parted.

CHARLES WESLEY'S HYMNS.

18. In the year 1749 my brother printed two volumes of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. As I did not see these before they were published, there were some things in them which I did not approve of. But I quite approved of the main of the hymns on this head, a few verses of which are subjoined:

COME, Lord, be manifested here,
And all the devil's works destroy;
Now, without sin, in me appear,
And fill with everlasting joy:
Thy beatific face display;
Thy presence is the perfect day.

SWIFT to my rescue come,
 Thy own this moment seize;
 Gather my wand'ring spirit home,
 And keep in perfect peace.

Suffer'd no more to rove
 O'er all the earth abroad,
 Arrest the pris'ner of thy love,
 And shut me up in God!

THY pris'ners release, vouchsafe us thy peace;
 And our sorrows and sins in a moment shall cease.
 That moment be now! Our petition allow,
 Our present Redeemer and Comforter thou!

FROM this inbred sin deliver;
 Let the yoke Now be broke;
 Make me thine forever.
 Partner of thy perfect nature,
 Let me be Now in thee
 A new, sinless creature.

TURN me, Lord, and turn me now,
 To thy yoke my spirit bow:
 Grant me now the pearl to find
 Of a meek and quiet mind.

Calm, O calm my troubled breast;
 Let me gain that second rest:
 From my works forever cease,
 Perfected in holiness.

COME in this accepted hour,
 Bring thy heavenly kingdom in!
 Fill us with the glorious power,
 Rooting out the seeds of sin.

COME, thou dear Lamb, for sinners slain,
 Bring in the cleansing flood:
 Apply, to wash out every stain,
 Thine efficacious blood.

O let it sink into our soul
 Deep as the inbred sin:
 Make every wounded spirit whole,
 And every leper clean!

PRIS'NERS of hope arise,
 And see your Lord appear:
 Lo! on the wings of love he flies,
 And brings redemption near.

Redemption in his blood
 He calls you to receive:
 "Come unto me, the pard'ning God:
 Believe," he cries, "believe!"

Jesus, to thee we look,
 Till saved from sin's remains,
 Reject the inbred tyrant's yoke,
 And cast away his chains.

Our nature shall no more
 O'er us dominion have:
 By faith we apprehend the power,
 Which shall forever save.

JESUS, our life, in us appear,
 Who daily die thy death:
 Reveal thyself the finisher;
 Thy quick'ning Spirit breathe!

Unfold the hidden mystery,
 The second gift impart;
 Reveal thy glorious self in me,
 In every waiting heart.

IN Him we have peace, In him we have power!
 Preserved by his grace throughout the dark hour.
 In all our temptations he keeps us, to prove
 His utmost salvation, his fullness of love.

Pronounce the glad word, and bid us be free!
 Ah, hast thou not, Lord, a blessing for me?
 The peace thou hast given, this moment impart,
 And open thy heavens, O Love, in my heart!

A second edition of these hymns was published in the year 1752, and that without any other alteration than that of a few literal mistakes.

I have been the more large in these extracts because hence it appears, beyond all possibility of exception, that to this day both my brother and I maintained, (1) That the Christian perfection is that love of God and our neighbor which implies deliverance from all sin. (2) That this is received merely by faith. (3) That it is given instantaneously, in one moment. (4) That we are to expect it, not at death, but every moment; that now is the accepted time, now is the day of this salvation.

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

19. At the Conference in the year 1759, perceiving some danger that a diversity of sentiments should insensibly steal in among us, we again largely considered this doctrine; and soon after I published *Thoughts on Christian Perfection*, prefaced with the following advertisement:

"The following tract is by no means designed to gratify the curiosity of any man. It is not intended to prove the doctrine at large, in opposition to those who explode and ridicule it; no, nor to answer the numerous objections against it, which may be raised even by serious men. All I intend here is simply to declare what are my sentiments on this head; what Christian perfection does, according to my apprehension, include, and what it does not; and to add a few practical observations and directions relative to the subject.

"As these thoughts were at first thrown together by way of question and answer, I let them continue in the same form. They are just the same that I have entertained for above twenty years.

"QUESTION. What is Christian perfection?

"ANSWER. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions are governed by pure love.

"Q. Do you affirm that this perfection excludes all infirmities, ignorance, and mistake?

"A. I continually affirm quite the contrary; and always have done so.

"Q. But how can every thought, word, and work be governed by pure love, and the man be subject at the same time to ignorance and mistake?

"A. I see no contradiction here: 'A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake.' Indeed, I do not expect to be freed from actual mistakes till this mortal puts on immortality. I believe this to be a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. For we cannot now think at all but by the mediation of those bodily organs which have suffered equally with the rest of our frame. And hence we cannot avoid sometimes thinking wrong, till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.

"But we may carry this thought farther yet. A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice. For instance: Mr. De Renty's mistake

touching the nature of mortification, arising from prejudice of education, occasioned that practical mistake, his wearing an iron girdle. And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action springs from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin. However, it cannot bear the rigor of God's justice, but needs the atoning blood.

"Q. What was the judgment of all our brethren who met at Bristol in August, 1758, on this head?

"A. It was expressed in these words: (1) Every one may mistake as long as he lives. (2) A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. (3) Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore, (4) Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. (5) It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'

"This easily accounts for what might otherwise seem to be utterly unaccountable, namely, that those who are not offended when we speak of the highest degree of love, yet will not hear of living without sin. The reason is, they know all men are liable to mistake, and that in practice as well as in judgment. But they do not know, or do not observe, that this is not sin if love is the sole principle of action.

"Q. But still, if they live without sin, does not this exclude the necessity of a mediator? At least, is it not plain that they stand no longer in need of Christ in his priestly office?

"A. Far from it. None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give life to the soul separate from but in and with himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatsoever state of grace they are: 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: without' (or separate from) 'me ye can do nothing.'

"In every state we need Christ in the following respects: (1) Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from him. (2) We receive it as his purchase, merely in consideration of the price he paid. (3) We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit, but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. (4) All our blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, depend on his intercession for us, which is one branch of his priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. (5) The best of men still need Christ in his priestly office to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these are all deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend, may appear from the words of St. Paul, 'He that loveth hath fulfilled the law: for love is the fulfilling of the law' (Rom. xiii, 10). Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body are no way contrary to love; nor, therefore, in the Scripture-sense, sin.

To explain myself a little farther on this head: (1) Not only sin properly so called (that is, a voluntary transgression of a known law), but sin improperly so called (that is, an involuntary transgression of a divine law, known or unknown) needs the atoning blood. (2) I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions, which I apprehend to be naturally con-

sequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. (3) Therefore, *sinless perfection* is a phrase I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself. (4) I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. (5) Such transgressions you may call sins, if you please; I do not, for the reasons above mentioned.

“Q. What advice would you give to those that do, and those that do not, call them so?

“A. Let those that do not call them sins never think that themselves or any other persons are in such a state as that they can stand before infinite justice without a Mediator. This must argue either the deepest ignorance or the highest arrogance and presumption.

“Let those who do call them so beware how they confound these defects with sins, properly so called.

“But how will they avoid it? How will these be distinguished from those, if they are all promiscuously called sins? I am much afraid, if we should allow any sins to be consistent with perfection, few would confine the idea to those defects concerning which only the assertion could be true.

“Q. But how can a liableness to mistake consist with perfect love? Is not a person who is perfected in love every moment under its influence? And can any mistake flow from pure love?

“A. I answer: (1) Many mistakes may consist with pure love. (2) Some may accidentally flow from it; I mean love itself may incline us to mistake. The pure love of neighbor, springing from the love of God, thinketh no evil, believeth and hopeth all things. Now, this very temper, unsuspicious, ready to believe and hope the best of all men, may occasion our thinking some men better than they really are. Here then is a manifest mistake, accidentally flowing from pure love.

“Q. How shall we avoid setting perfection too high or too low?

“A. By keeping to the Bible, and setting it just as high as the Scripture does. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this—the pure love of God and man; the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions.

“Q. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

“A. At first, perhaps, he would scarce be able to refrain, the fire would be so hot within him; his desire to declare the loving-kindness of the Lord carrying him away like a torrent. But afterward he might; and then it would be advisable not to speak of it to them that know not God (it is most likely it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme); nor to others, without some particular reason, without some good in view. And then he should have especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting; to speak with the deepest humility and reverence, giving all the glory to God.

“Q. But would it not be better to be entirely silent, not to speak of it at all?

“A. By silence he might avoid many crosses, which will naturally and necessarily ensue if he simply declare, even among believers, what God has wrought in his soul. If, therefore, such an one were to confer with flesh and blood, he would be entirely silent. But this could not be done with a clear conscience; for undoubtedly he ought to speak. Men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel; much less does the all-wise God. He does not raise such a monument of his power and love and hide it from all mankind. Rather, he intends it as a general blessing to those who are simple of heart. He designs thereby not barely the happiness of that

individual person, but the animating and encouraging others to follow after the same blessing. His will is 'that many shall see it' and rejoice, 'and put their trust in the Lord.' Nor does any thing under heaven more quicken the desires of those who are justified than to converse with those whom they believe to have experienced a still higher salvation. This places that salvation full in their view, and increases their hunger and thirst after it; an advantage which must have been entirely lost had the person so saved buried himself in silence.

"Q. But is there no way to prevent these crosses which usually fall on those who speak of being thus saved?

"A. It seems they cannot be prevented altogether, while so much of nature remains even in believers. But something might be done, if the preacher in every place would (1) talk freely with all who speak thus, and (2) labor to prevent the unjust or unkind treatment of those in favor of whom there is reasonable proof.

"Q. What is reasonable proof? How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin?

"A. We cannot infallibly know one that is thus saved (no, nor even one that is justified), unless it should please God to endow us with the miraculous discernment of spirits. But we apprehend these would be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work: (1) If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behavior for some time before this supposed change. This would give us reason to believe he would not 'lie for God,' but speak neither more nor less than he felt. (2) If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought, with sound speech which could not be reprov'd; and (3) If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblameable.

"The short of the matter is this: (1) I have abundant reason to believe this person will not lie. (2) He testifies before God, 'I feel no sin, but all love; I pray, rejoice, and give thanks without ceasing; and I have as clear an inward witness that I am fully renewed as that I am justified.' Now, if I have nothing to oppose to this plain testimony, I ought in reason to believe it.

"It avails nothing to object, 'but I know several things wherein he is quite mistaken.' For it has been allowed that all who are in the body are liable to mistake; and that a mistake in judgment may sometimes occasion a mistake in practice; though great care is to be taken that no ill use be made of this concession. For instance: Even one that is perfected in love may mistake with regard to another person, and may think him in a particular case to be more or less faulty than he really is. And hence he may speak to him with more or less severity than the truth requires. And in this sense (though that be not the primary meaning of St. James) 'in many things we offend all.' This, therefore, is no proof at all that the person so speaking is not perfect.

"Q. But is it not a proof if he is surprised or fluttered by a noise, a fall, or some sudden danger?

"A. It is not; for one may start, tremble, change color, or be otherwise disordered in body while the soul is calmly stayed on God and remains in perfect peace. Nay, the mind itself may be deeply distressed, may be exceeding sorrowful, may be perplexed and pressed down by heaviness and anguish, even to agony, while the heart cleaves to God by perfect love, and the will is wholly resigned to him. Was it not so with the Son of God himself? Does any child of man endure the distress, the anguish, the agony which he sustained? And yet he knew no sin.

"Q. But can any one who has a pure heart prefer pleasing to displeasing food

or use any pleasure of sense which is not strictly necessary? If so, how do they differ from others?

"A. The difference between these and others in taking pleasant food is: (1) They need none of these things to make them happy, for they have a spring of happiness within. They see and love God. Hence they rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. (2) They may use them, but they do not seek them. (3) They use them sparingly, and not for the sake of the thing itself. This being premised, we answer directly—such an one may use pleasing food without the danger which attends those who are not saved from sin. He may prefer it to unpleasing, though equally wholesome, food as a means of increasing thankfulness, with a single eye to God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. On the same principle he may smell, too, a flower, or eat a bunch of grapes, or take any other pleasure which does not lessen but increase his delight in God. Therefore, neither can we say that one perfected in love would be incapable of marriage and of worldly business; if he were called thereto, he would be more capable than ever, as being able to do all things without hurry or carefulness, without any distraction of spirit.

"Q. But if two perfect Christians had children, how could they be born in sin, since there was none in the parents?

"A. It is a possible, but not a probable case; I doubt whether it ever was or ever will be. But, waiving this, I answer, sin is entailed upon me, not by immediate generation, but by my first parent. 'In Adam all die; by the disobedience of one all men were made sinners;' all men, without exception, who were in his loins when he ate the forbidden fruit.

"We have a remarkable illustration of this in gardening; grafts on a crab stock bear excellent fruit, but sow the kernels of this fruit, and what will be the event? They produce as mere crabs as ever were eaten.

"Q. But what does the perfect one do more than others, more than the common believers?

"A. Perhaps nothing; so may the providence of God have hedged him in by outward circumstances. Perhaps not so much, though he desires and longs to spend and be spent for God; at least, not externally. He neither speaks so many words nor does so many works. As neither did our Lord himself speak so many words, or do so many, no, nor so great works as some of his apostles (John xiv. 12). But what then? This is no proof that he has not more grace; and by this God measures the outward work. Hear ye him: 'Verily, I say unto you, this poor widow has cast in more than them all.' Verily, this poor man, with his few broken words, hath spoken more than them all. Verily, this poor woman, that hath given a cup of cold water, hath done more than them all. O, cease to 'judge according to appearance,' and learn to 'judge righteous judgment!'

"Q. But is not this a proof against him—I feel no power either in his words or prayer?

"A. It is not; for perhaps that is your own fault. You are not likely to feel any power therein if any of these hinderances lie in the way: (1) Your own deadness of soul. The dead Pharisees felt no power even in His words, who 'spake as never man spake.' (2) The guilt of some unrepented sin lying upon the conscience. (3) Prejudice toward him of any kind. (4) Your not believing that state to be attainable wherein he professes to be. (5) Unreadiness to think or own he has attained it. (6) Overvaluing or idolizing him. (7) Overvaluing yourself and your own judgment. If any of these is the case, what wonder is it that you feel no power in any thing he says? But do not others feel it? If they do, your argument falls

to the ground. And if they do not, do none of these hinderances lie in their way too? You must be certain of this before you can build any argument thereon, and even then your argument will prove no more than that grace and gifts do not always go together.

“‘But he does not come up to my idea of a perfect Christian.’ And perhaps no one ever did or ever will. For your idea may go beyond, or at least beside, the scriptural account. It may include more than the Bible includes therein, or, however, something which that does not include. Scripture perfection is pure love filling the heart and governing all the words and actions. If your idea includes any thing more or any thing else, it is not scriptural; and then no wonder that a scripturally perfect Christian does not come up to it.

“I fear many stumble on this stumbling-block. They include as many ingredients as they please, not according to Scripture, but their own imagination, in their idea of one that is perfect, and then readily deny any one to be such who does not answer that imaginary idea.

“The more care should we take to keep the simple scriptural account continually in our eye. Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life—this is the whole of scriptural perfection.

“Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

“A. When, after having been fully convinced of inbred sin by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks. Not that ‘to feel all love and no sin’ is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time before their souls were fully renewed. None, therefore, ought to believe that the work is done till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification as clearly as justification.

“Q. But whence is it that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

“A. It is hence: they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person attending to them all, and yet deceived in this manner. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterward an entire renewal in the image of God; if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal, I judge it as impossible that this man should be deceived herein as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

“Q. Is this death to sin and renewal in love gradual or instantaneous?

“A. A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone when the body dies is of a different kind and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive, so the change wrought when the soul dies to sin is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge

of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

“Q. How are we to wait for this change?

“A. Not in careless indifference or indolent inactivity, but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily, as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it in any other way (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true we receive it by simple faith; but God does not, will not, give that faith unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

“This consideration may satisfy those who inquire why so few have received the blessing. Inquire how many are seeking it in this way, and you have a sufficient answer.

“Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So, ‘ye have not, because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss,’ namely, that you may be renewed before you die. *Before you die!* Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this ‘setting God a time.’ Certainly, to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

Thy soul break out in strong desire

The perfect bliss to prove;

Thy longing heart be all on fire

To be dissolved in love!

“Q. But may we not continue in peace and joy till we are perfected in love?

“A. Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from ‘rejoicing in the Lord always.’ And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to ‘press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.’ And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound.

“Q. How should we treat those who think they have attained?

“A. Examine them candidly, and exhort them to pray fervently, that God would show them all that is in their hearts. The most earnest exhortations to abound in every grace, and the strongest cautions to avoid all evil, are given throughout the New Testament to those who are in the highest state of grace. But this should be done with the utmost tenderness, and without any harshness, sternness, or sourness. We should carefully avoid the very appearance of anger, unkindness, or contempt. Leave it to Satan thus to tempt, and to his children to cry out, ‘Let us examine him with despitefulness and torture, that we may know his meekness and prove his patience.’ If they are faithful to the grace given, they are in no danger of perishing thereby; no, not if they remain in that mistake till their spirit is returning to God.

“Q. But what hurt can it do to deal harshly with them?

“A. Either they are mistaken or they are not. If they are, it may destroy their souls. This is nothing impossible, no, nor improbable. It may so enrage or so discourage them that they will sink and rise no more. If they are not mistaken, it

may grieve those whom God has not grieved, and do much hurt unto our own souls. For undoubtedly he that toucheth them toucheth, as it were, the apple of God's eye. If they are indeed full of his Spirit, to behave unkindly or contemptuously to them is doing no little despite to the Spirit of grace. Hereby, likewise, we feed and increase in ourselves evil surmising, and many wrong tempers. To instance only in one: What self-sufficiency is this, to set ourselves up for inquisitors-general, for peremptory judges in these deep things of God? Are we qualified for the office? Can we pronounce, in all cases, how far infirmity reaches? what may and what may not be resolved into it? what may in all circumstances and what may not consist with perfect love? Can we precisely determine how it will influence the look, the gesture, the tone of voice? If we can, doubtless we are 'the men, and wisdom shall die with us.'

"Q. But if they are displeased at our not believing them, is not this a full proof against them?

"A. According as that displeasure is: if they are angry, it is a proof against them; if they are grieved, it is not. They ought to be grieved if we disbelieve a real work of God, and thereby deprive ourselves of the advantage we might have received from it. And we may easily mistake this grief for anger, as the outward expressions of both are much alike.

"Q. But is it not well to find out those who fancy they have attained when they have not?

"A. It is well to do it by mild, loving examination. But it is not well to triumph even over these. It is extremely wrong, if we find such an instance, to rejoice as if we had found great spoils. Ought we not rather to grieve, to be deeply concerned, to let our eyes run down with tears? Here is one who seemed to be a living proof of God's power to save to the uttermost; but, alas! it is not as we hoped. He is weighed in the balance, and found wanting! And is this matter of joy? Ought we not to rejoice a thousand times more if we can find nothing but pure love?

"'But he is deceived.' What then? It is a harmless mistake while he feels nothing but love in his heart. It is a mistake which generally argues great grace, a high degree both of holiness and happiness. This should be a matter of real joy to all that are simple of heart; not the mistake itself, but the height of grace which for a time occasions it. I rejoice that this soul is always happy in Christ, always full of prayer and thanksgiving. I rejoice that he feels no unholy temper, but the pure love of God continually. And I will rejoice if sin is suspended till it is totally destroyed.

"Q. Is there no danger then in a man's being thus deceived?

"A. Not at the time that he feels no sin. There was danger before, and there will be again when he comes into fresh trials. But so long as he feels nothing but love animating all his thoughts and words and actions, he is in no danger; he is not only happy, but safe, 'under the shadow of the Almighty;' and, for God's sake, let him continue in that love as long as he can. Meantime, you may do well to warn him of the danger that will be if his love grow cold and sin revive; even the danger of casting away hope, and supposing that, because he hath not attained yet, therefore he never shall.

"Q. But what if none have attained it yet? What if all who think so are deceived?

"A. Convince me of this, and I will preach it no more. But understand me right: I do not build any doctrine on this or that person. This or any other man may be

deceived, and I am not moved. But if there are none made perfect yet, God has not sent me to preach perfection.

"Put a parallel case: For many years I have preached, 'There is a peace of God which passeth all understanding.' Convince me that this word has fallen to the ground; that in all these years none have attained this peace; that there is no living witness of it at this day, and I will preach it no more.

"O, but several persons have died in that peace.' Perhaps so; but I want living witnesses. I cannot indeed be infallibly certain that this or that person is a witness; but if I were certain there are none such, I must have done with this doctrine.

"You misunderstand me. I believe some who died in this love enjoyed it long before their death. But I was not certain that their former testimony was true till some hours before they died.'

"You had not an infallible certainty then; and a reasonable certainty you might have had before; such a certainty as might have quickened and comforted your own soul, and answered all other Christian purposes. Such a certainty as this any candid person may have, suppose there be any living witness, by talking one hour with that person in the love and fear of God.

"Q. But what does it signify, whether any have attained it or no, seeing so many Scriptures witness for it?

"A. If I were convinced that none of England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of preachers, in so many places, and for so long a time, I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those Scriptures; and therefore, for the time to come, I too must teach that 'sin will remain till death.'"

ENTHUSIASM BREAKING IN.

20. In the year 1762 there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many who had hitherto cared for none of these things were deeply convinced of their lost estate; many found redemption in the blood of Christ; not a few backsliders were healed; and a considerable number of persons believed that God had saved them from all sin. Easily foreseeing that Satan would be endeavoring to sow tares among the wheat, I took much pains to apprise them of the danger, particularly with regard to pride and enthusiasm. And while I stayed in town I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should never die; and these, laboring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagances; fancying they could not be tempted that they should feel no more pain, and that they had the gift of prophecy and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London, in autumn, some of them stood reprov'd; but

others were got above instruction. Meantime, a flood of reproach came upon me almost from every quarter ; from themselves, because I was checking them on all occasions ; and from others, because, they said, I did not check them. However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced ; while some were almost daily converted to God, and others enabled to love him with all their heart.

21. About this time a friend at some distance from London wrote to me as follows :

“Be not over alarmed that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It ever has been so, especially on any remarkable outpouring of his Spirit ; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always ape and endeavor to counteract the work of the Spirit of Christ.

“One melancholy effect of this has been that a world who is always asleep in the arms of the evil one has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

“But what can real Christians do ? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should (1) pray that every deluded soul may be delivered ; (2) endeavor to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness ; and, lastly, take the utmost care, both by prayer and watchfulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that universal holiness of soul, body, and spirit, ‘without which no man shall see the Lord.’

“Indeed, this complete new creature is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the will and wisdom of God. May we all seek after it !

“But some who maintain this doctrine in its full extent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases ; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

“God’s usual method is one thing, but his sovereign pleasure is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work. Sometimes he comes suddenly and unexpected ; sometimes not till we have long looked for him.

“Indeed, it has been my opinion for many years that one great cause why men make so little improvement in divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

“May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, and ‘fill us with all the fullness of God ;’ that so we may be ‘perfect and entire, wanting nothing.’”

22. About the same time five or six honest enthusiasts foretold the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West Street and Spitalfields. I warned the society again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could ; and I saw the fruit of my labor. They made exceedingly few converts ; I believe scarce thirty in our whole society. Nevertheless, they made

abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offense to those who took care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against me, and greatly increased both the number and courage of those who opposed Christian perfection.

QUERIES PROPOSED.

23. Some questions now published by one of these induced a plain man to write the following

"Queries, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

"(1) Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? (John vii, 39.)

"(2) Was that 'glory which followed the sufferings of Christ' (1 Pet. i, 11) an external glory, or an internal, namely, the glory of holiness?

"(3) Has God anywhere in Scripture commanded us more than he has promised to us?

"(4) Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

"(5) Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to 'write in our hearts?' (Jer. xxxi, 31, etc., and Heb. viii, 10.)

"(6) In what sense is 'the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit?' (Rom. viii, 4.)

"(7) Is it impossible for any one in this life to 'love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?' And is the Christian under any law which is not fulfilled in this love?

"(8) Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

"(9) If so, is it not something else, not 'the blood of Christ, which cleanseth' it 'from all sin'?

"(10) If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the body and soul are united, is it not in this life?

"(11) If when that union ceaseth, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?

"(12) If in the article of death, what situation is the soul in, when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

"(13) Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what he never designs to give?

"(14) Has he not taught us to pray, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven?' And is it not done perfectly in heaven?

"(15) If so, has he not taught us to pray for perfection on earth? Does he not then design to give it?

"(16) Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be 'sanctified wholly, and preserved' (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) 'blameless in body, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ'?

"(17) Do you sincerely desire to be freed from indwelling sin in this life?

"(18) If you do, did not God give you that desire?

"(19) If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled ?

"(20) If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, are you not disputing about matters too high for you ?

"(21) Do you ever pray God to 'cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that' you 'may perfectly love him ?'

"(22) If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth ?

"God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially !"

A WITNESS OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

24. In the latter end of this year God called to himself that burning and shining light, Jane Cooper. As she was both a living and a dying witness of Christian perfection, it will not be at all foreign to the subject to add a short account of her death, with one of her own letters, containing a plain and artless relation of the manner wherein it pleased God to work that great change in her soul :

May 2, 1761.

"I believe while memory remains in me, gratitude will continue. From the time you preached on Gal. v, 5, I saw clearly the true state of my soul. That sermon described my heart, and what it wanted to be, namely, truly happy. You read Mr. M.'s letter, and it described the religion which I desired. From that time the prize appeared in view, and I was enabled to follow hard after it. I was kept watching unto prayer, sometimes in much distress, at other times in patient expectation of the blessing. For some days before you left London my soul was stayed on a promise I had applied to me in prayer : 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.' I believed he would, and that he would sit there as a refiner's fire. The Tuesday after you went I thought I could not sleep unless he fulfilled his word that night. I never knew as I did then the force of these words : 'Be still, and know that I am God.' I became nothing before him, and enjoyed perfect calmness in my soul. I knew not whether he had destroyed my sin ; but I desired to know, that I might praise him. Yet I soon found the return of unbelief, and groaned, being burdened. On Wednesday I went to London, and sought the Lord without ceasing. I promised if he would save me from sin I would praise him. I could part with all things, so I might win Christ. But I found all these pleas to be nothing worth ; and that if he saved me, it must be freely, for his own name's sake. On Thursday I was so much tempted that I thought of destroying myself, or never conversing more with the people of God ; and yet I had no doubt of his pardoning love ; but,

'Twas worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone.

On Friday my distress was deepened. I endeavored to pray, and could not. I went to Mrs. D., who prayed for me, and told me it was the death of nature. I opened the Bible on 'The fearful and unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.' I could not bear it. I opened again, on Mark xvi, 6, 7 : 'Be not affrighted : ye seek Jesus of Nazareth. Go your way, tell his

disciples he goeth before you into Galilee : there ye shall see him.' I was encouraged, and enabled to pray, believing I should see Jesus at home. I returned that night, and found Mrs. G. She prayed for me ; and the predestinarian had no plea but, 'Lord, thou art no respecter of persons.' He proved he was not by blessing me. I was in a moment enabled to lay hold on Jesus Christ, and found salvation by simple faith. He assured me the Lord, the King, was in the midst of me, and that I should see evil no more. I now blessed Him who had visited and redeemed me, and was become my 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' I saw Jesus altogether lovely, and knew he was mine in all his offices. And, glory be to him, he now reigns in my heart without a rival. I find no will but his. I feel no pride ; nor any affection but what is placed on him. I know it is by faith I stand ; and that watching unto prayer must be the guard of faith. I am happy in God this moment, and I believe for the next. I have often read the chapter you mention (1 Cor. xiii), and compared my heart and life with it. In so doing I feel my short-comings, and the need I have of the atoning blood. Yet I dare not say, I do not feel a measure of the love there described, though I am not all I shall be. I desire to be lost in that 'love which passeth knowledge.' I see the 'just shall live by faith ;' and unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace-given. If I were an archangel, I should veil my face before him, and let silence speak his praise !"

The following account was given by one who was an eye and ear witness of what she relates :

"(1) In the beginning of November she seemed to have a foresight of what was coming upon her, and used frequently to sing these words :

'When pain o'er this weak flesh prevails,
With lamb-like patience arm my breast.'

And when she sent to me, to let me know she was ill, she wrote in her note, 'I suffer the will of Jesus. All he sends is sweetened by his love. I am as happy as if I heard a voice say :

'For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come !'

"(2) Upon my telling her, 'I cannot choose life or death for you,' she said, 'I asked the Lord that, if it was his will, I might die first. And he told me you should survive me, and that you should close my eyes.' When we perceived it was the small-pox, I said to her, 'My dear, you will not be frightened if we tell you what is your distemper.' She said, 'I cannot be frightened at His will.'

"(3) The distemper was soon very heavy upon her ; but so much the more was her faith strengthened. Tuesday, November 16, she said to me, 'I have been worshiping before the throne in a glorious manner ; my soul was so let into God !' I said, 'Did the Lord give you any particular promise ?' 'No,' replied she ; 'it was all

That sacred awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

"(4) On Thursday, upon my asking, 'What have you to say to me ?' she said, 'Nay, nothing but what you know already : God is love.' I asked, 'Have you any

particular promise?' She replied, 'I do not seem to want any; I can live without. I shall die a lump of deformity, but shall meet you all glorious; and, meantime, I shall still have fellowship with your spirit.'

"(5) Mr. M. asked what she thought the most excellent way to walk in, and what were its chief hinderances. She answered: 'The greatest hinderance is generally from the natural constitution. It was mine to be reserved, to be very quiet, to suffer much, and to say little. Some may think one way more excellent, and some another; but the thing is to live in the will of God. For some months past, when I have been particularly devoted to this, I have felt such a guidance of his Spirit, and the unction which I have received from the Holy One has so taught me of all things, that I needed not any man should teach me, save as this anointing teacheth.'

"(6) On Friday morning she said, 'I believe I shall die.' She then sat up in her bed and said, 'Lord, I bless thee, that thou art ever with me, and all thou hast is mine. Thy love is greater than my weakness, greater than my helplessness, greater than my unworthiness. Lord, thou sayest *to corruption, Thou art my sister!* And glory be to thee, O Jesus, thou art my brother. Let me comprehend, with all saints, the length and breadth and depth and height of thy love! Bless these' (some that were present); 'let them be every moment exercised in all things as thou wouldest have them to be.'

"(7) Some hours after it seemed as if the agonies of death were just coming upon her; but her face was full of smiles of triumph, and she clapped her hands for joy. Mrs. C. said, 'My dear, you are more than conqueror through the blood of the Lamb.' She answered, 'Yes, O yes, sweet Jesus! O death, where is thy sting?' She then lay as in a doze for some time. Afterward, she strove to speak, but could not; however, she testified her love by shaking hands with all in the room.

"(8) Mr. W. then came. She said, 'Sir, I did not know that I should live to see you. But I am glad the Lord has given me this opportunity, and likewise power to speak to you. I love you. You have always preached the strictest doctrine; and I loved to follow it. Do so still, whoever is pleased or displeased.' He asked, 'Do you now believe you are saved from sin?' She said, 'Yes; I have had no doubt of it for many months. That I ever had was because I did not abide in the faith. I now feel I have kept the faith; and perfect love casteth out all fear. As to you, the Lord promised me your latter works should exceed your former, though I do not live to see it. I have been a great enthusiast, as they term it, these six months; but never lived so near the heart of Christ in my life. You, sir, desire to comfort the hearts of hundreds by following that simplicity your soul loves.'

"(9) To one who had received the love of God under her prayer she said, 'I feel I have not followed a cunningly devised fable; for I am as happy as I can live. Do you press on, and stop not short of the mark.' To Miss M—s she said, 'Love Christ; he loves you. I believe I shall see you at the right hand of God. But *as one star differs from another star in glory, so shall it be in the resurrection.* I charge you, in the presence of God, meet me in that day all glorious within. Avoid all conformity to the world. You are robbed of many of your privileges. I know I shall be found blameless. Do you labor to be found of him *in peace, without spot.*'

"(10) Saturday morning she prayed nearly as follows: 'I know, my Lord, my life is prolonged only to do thy will. And though I should never eat or drink

more' (she had not swallowed any thing for near eight and twenty hours), 'thy will be done. I am willing to be kept so a twelve-month: *Man liveth not by bread alone.* I praise thee that there is not a shadow of complaining in our streets. In that sense we know not what sickness means. Indeed, Lord, *neither life nor death, nor things present nor things to come, no, nor any creature, shall separate us from thy love* one moment. Bless these, that there may be no lack in their souls. I believe there shall not. I pray in faith.'

"On Sunday and Monday she was light-headed, but sensible at times. It then plainly appeared her heart was still in heaven. One said to her, 'Jesus is our mark.' She replied: 'I have but one mark; I am all spiritual.' Miss M. said to her, 'You dwell in God.' She answered, 'Altogether.' A person asked her, 'Do you love me?' She said, 'O, I love Christ; I love my Christ.' To another she said, 'I shall not long be here; Jesus is precious, very precious indeed.' She said to Miss M., 'The Lord is very good; he keeps my soul above all.' For fifteen hours before she died she was in strong convulsions; her sufferings were extreme. One said, 'You are made perfect through sufferings.' She said, 'More and more so.' After lying quiet some time, she said, 'Lord, thou art strong!' Then, pausing a considerable space, she uttered her last words, 'My Jesus is all in all to me: glory be to him through time and eternity.' After this she lay still for about half an hour, and then expired without a sigh or groan."

FARTHER THOUGHTS ON PERFECTION.

25. The next year, the number of those who believed they were saved from sin still increasing, I judged it needful to publish, chiefly for their use, *Farther Thoughts on Christian Perfection*:

"QUESTION 1. How is 'Christ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth' (Rom. x, 4).

"ANSWER. In order to understand this, you must understand what law is here spoken of; and this, I apprehend, is: (1) The Mosaic law, the whole Mosaic dispensation; which St. Paul continually speaks of as one, though containing three parts, the political, moral, and ceremonial. (2) The Adamic law, that given to Adam in innocence, properly called 'the law of works.' This is in substance the same with the angelic law, being common to angels and men. It required that man should use to the glory of God all the powers with which he was created. Now, he was created free from any defect, either in his understanding or his affections. His body was then no clog to the mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly, if he reasoned at all. I say, *if he reasoned*, for possibly he did not. Perhaps he had no need of reasoning till his corruptible body pressed down the mind and impaired its native faculties. Perhaps, till then, the mind saw every truth that offered as directly as the eye now sees the light.

"Consequently, this law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able so to do; and God could not but require the service he was able to pay.

"But Adam fell; and his incorruptible body became corruptible; and ever since it is a clog to the soul, and hinders its operations. Hence, at present, no

child of man can at all times apprehend clearly, or judge truly. And where either the judgment or apprehension is wrong, it is impossible to reason justly. Therefore, it is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe; and he can no more live without the one than without the other; consequently, no man is able to perform the service which the Adamic law requires.

"And no man is obliged to perform it; God does not require it of any man; for Christ is the end of the Adamic as well as the Mosaic law. By his death he hath put an end to both; he hath abolished both the one and the other, with regard to man; and the obligation to observe either the one or the other is vanished away. Nor is any man living bound to observe the Adamic more than the Mosaic law. (I mean it is not the condition either of present or future salvation.)

"In the room of this, Christ hath established another, namely, the law of faith. Not every one that doeth, but every one that believeth, now receiveth righteousness, in the full sense of the word; that is, he is justified, sanctified, and glorified.

"Q. 2. Are we then dead to the law?

"A. We are 'dead to the law by the body of Christ' given for us (Rom. vii, 4); to the Adamic as well as Mosaic law. We are wholly freed therefrom by his death; that law expiring with him.

"Q. 3. How, then, are we 'not without law to God, but under the law to Christ?' (1 Cor. ix, 21.)

"A. We are without that law; but it does not follow that we are without any law: for God has established another law in its place, even the law of faith; and we are all under this law to God and to Christ; both our Creator and our Redeemer require us to observe it.

"Q. 4. Is love the fulfilling of this law?

"A. Unquestionably it is. The whole law under which we now are is fulfilled by love (Rom. xiii, 9, 10). Faith working or animated by love is all that God now requires of man. He has substituted (not sincerity, but) love, in the room of angelic perfection.

"Q. 5. How is 'love the end of the commandment?' (1 Tim. i, 5.)

"A. It is the end of every commandment of God. It is the point aimed at by the whole and every part of the Christian institution. The foundation is faith, purifying the heart; the end love, preserving a good conscience.

"Q. 6. What love is this?

"A. The loving the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and the loving our neighbor, every man, as ourselves, as our own souls.

"Q. 7. What are the fruits or properties of this love?

"A. St. Paul informs us at large, love is long-suffering. It suffers all the weaknesses of the children of God, all the wickedness of the children of the world; and that not for a little time only, but as long as God pleases. In all, it sees the hand of God, and willingly submits thereto. Meantime, it is kind. In all, and after all, it suffers it is soft, mild, tender, benign. 'Love envieth not;' it excludes every kind and degree of envy out of the heart. 'Love acteth not rashly,' in a violent, headstrong manner, nor passes any rash or severe judgment; it 'doth not behave itself indecently;' is not rude, does not act out of character; 'seeketh not her own' ease, pleasure, honor, or profit; 'is not provoked;' expels all anger from the heart; 'thinketh no evil;' casteth out all jealousy, suspiciousness, and readiness to believe evil; 'rejoiceth not in iniquity;' yea, weeps at the sin or folly of its bitterest enemies, 'but rejoiceth in the truth,' in the holiness and happiness of every child of man. 'Love covereth all things,' speaks evil of no man; 'be-

lieth all things' that tend to the advantage of another's character. It 'hopeth all things,' whatever may extenuate the faults which cannot be denied; and it 'endureth all things' which God can permit, or men and devils inflict. This is 'the law of Christ, the perfect law, the law of liberty.'

"And this distinction between the 'law of faith' (or love) and 'the law of works' is neither a subtle nor an unnecessary distinction. It is plain, easy, and intelligible to any common understanding. And it is absolutely necessary to prevent a thousand doubts and fears even in those who do 'walk in love.'

"Q. 8. But do we not 'in many things offend all,' yea, the best of us, even against this law?

"A. In one sense we do not, while all our tempers and thoughts and words and works spring from love. But in another we do, and shall do, more or less, as long as we remain in the body. For neither love nor the 'unction of the Holy One' makes us infallible; therefore, through unavoidable defect of understanding, we cannot but mistake in many things. And these mistakes will frequently occasion something wrong, both in our temper and words and actions. From mistaking his character, we may love a person less than he really deserves. And by the same mistake we are unavoidably led to speak or act, with regard to that person, in such a manner as is contrary to this law, in some or other of the preceding instances.

"Q. 9. Do we not then need Christ, even on this account?

"A. The holiest of men still need Christ as their prophet, as 'the light of the world.' For he does not give them light, but from moment to moment; the instant he withdraws, all is darkness. They still need Christ as their king; for God does not give them a stock of holiness. But unless they receive a supply every moment, nothing but unholiness would remain. They still need Christ as their priest, to make atonement for their holy things. Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ.

"Q. 10. May not, then, the very best of men adopt the dying martyr's confession: 'I am in myself nothing but sin, darkness, hell; but Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven?'

"A. Not exactly. But the best of men may say, 'Thou art my light, my holiness, my heaven. Through my union with thee I am full of light, of holiness, and happiness. But if I were left to myself, I should be nothing but sin, darkness, hell.'

"But to proceed: The best of men need Christ as their priest, their atonement, their advocate with the Father; not only as the continuance of their every blessing depends on his death and intercession, but on account of their coming short of the law of love. For every man living does so. You who feel all love, compare yourselves with the preceding description. Weigh yourselves in this balance, and see if you are not wanting in many particulars.

"Q. 11. But if all this be consistent with Christian perfection, that perfection is not freedom from all sin; seeing 'sin is the transgression of the law:' and the perfect transgress the very law they are under. Besides, they need the atonement of Christ; and he is the atonement of nothing but sin. Is, then, the term *sinless perfection* proper?

"A. It is not worth disputing about. But observe in what sense the persons in question need the atonement of Christ. They do not need him to reconcile them to God afresh; for they are reconciled. They do not need him to restore the favor of God, but to continue it. He does not procure pardon for them anew, but 'ever

liveth to make intercession for them ;' and ' by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified ' (Heb. x, 14).

"For want of duly considering this some deny that they need the atonement of Christ. Indeed, exceeding few ; I do not remember to have found five of them in England. Of the two, I would sooner give up perfection ; but we need not give up either one or the other. The perfection I hold, ' Love rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks,' is well consistent with it ; if any hold a perfection which is not, they must look to it.

"Q. 12. Does, then, Christian perfection imply any more than sincerity ?

"A. Not if you mean by that word love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will ; rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks. But I doubt few use sincerity in this sense. Therefore, I think the old word is best.

"A person may be sincere who has all his natural tempers—pride, anger, lust, self-will. But he is not perfect till his heart is cleansed from these and all its other corruptions.

"To clear this point a little farther : I know many that love God with all their heart. He is their one desire, their one delight, and they are continually happy in him. They love their neighbors as themselves. They feel as sincere, fervent, constant a desire for the happiness of every man, good or bad, friend or enemy, as for their own. They rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks. Their souls are continually streaming up to God in holy joy, prayer, and praise. This is a point of fact ; and this is plain, sound, scriptural experience.

"But even these souls dwell in a shattered body, and are so pressed down thereby that they cannot always exert themselves as they would, by thinking, speaking, and acting precisely right. For want of better bodily organs they must at times think, speak, or act wrong ; not indeed through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge. And while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect and its consequences, they fulfill the law of love.

"Yet as, even in this case, there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, so the most perfect do, on this very account, need the blood of atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their brethren, say, ' Forgive us our trespasses.'

"Q. 13. But if Christ has put an end to that law, what need of any atonement for their transgressing it ?

"A. Observe in what sense he has put an end to it, and the difficulty vanishes. Were it not for the abiding merit of his death, and his continual intercession for us, that law would condemn us still. These, therefore, we still need for every transgression of it.

"Q. 14. But can one that is saved from sin be tempted ?

"A. Yes ; for Christ was tempted.

"Q. 15. However, what you call temptation I call the corruption of my heart. And how will you distinguish one from the other ?

"A. In some cases it is impossible to distinguish without the direct witness of the Spirit. But in general one may distinguish thus :

"One commends me. Here is a temptation to pride. But instantly my soul is humbled before God. And I feel no pride ; of which I am as sure as that pride is not humility.

"A man strikes me. Here is a temptation to anger. But my heart overflows

with love. And I feel no anger at all; of which I can be as sure as that love and anger are not the same.

"A woman solicits me. Here is a temptation to lust. But in the instant I shrink back. And I feel no desire or lust at all; of which I can be as sure as that my hand is cold or hot.

"Thus it is if I am tempted by a present object; and it is just the same if, when it is absent, the devil recalls a commendation, an injury, or a woman to my mind. In the instant the soul repels the temptation, and remains filled with pure love.

"And the difference is still plainer when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation and corruption too.

"Q. 16. But how do you know that you are sanctified, saved from your inbred corruption?

"A. I can know it no otherwise than I know that I am justified. 'Hereby know we that we are of God,' in either sense, 'by the Spirit that he hath given us.'

"We know it by the witness and by the fruit of the Spirit. And, first, by the witness. As when we were justified the Spirit bore witness with our spirit that our sins were forgiven, so, when we were sanctified he bore witness that they were taken away. Indeed, the witness of sanctification is not always clear at first (as neither is that of justification); neither is it afterward always the same, but like that of justification, sometimes stronger and sometimes fainter. Yea, and sometimes it is withdrawn. Yet, in general, the latter testimony of the Spirit is both as clear and as steady as the former.

"Q. 17. But what need is there of it, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative only, like justification?

"A. But is the new birth a relative change only? Is not this a real change? Therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification, because it is a real change, for the same reason we should need none that we are born of or are the children of God.

"Q. 18. But does not sanctification shine by its own light?

"A. And does not the new birth too? Sometimes it does, and so does sanctification; at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have either very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness, without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this the soul could not then abide in the love of God; much less could it rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks. In these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest degree.

"'But I have no witness that I am saved from sin. And yet I have no doubt of it.' Very well: as long as you have no doubt, it is enough; when you have, you will need that witness.

"Q. 19. But what Scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it?

"A. That Scripture, 'We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given us of God' (1 Cor. ii, 12).

"Now, surely, sanctification is one of 'the things which are freely given us of God.' And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be accepted, when the apostle says, 'We receive the Spirit' for this very end, 'that we may know the things which are' thus 'freely given us.'

"Is not the same thing implied in that well-known Scripture, 'The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit, that we are the children of God?' (Rom. viii, 16.) Does he witness this only to those who are children of God in the lowest sense? Nay, but to those also who are such in the highest sense. And does he not witness that they are such in the highest sense? What reason have we to doubt it?

"What if a man were to affirm (as indeed many do) that this witness belongs only to the highest class of Christians? Would not you answer, 'The apostle makes no restriction; therefore, doubtless it belongs to all the children of God?' And will not the same answer hold if any affirm that it belongs only to the lowest class?

"Consider likewise 1 John v, 19: 'We know that we are of God.' How? 'By the Spirit that he hath given us.' Nay, 'hereby we know that he abideth in us.' And what ground have we, either from Scripture or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this then also 'we know that we are of God,' and in what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner.

"Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God; but those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ; and some have the testimony, both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume more might have did they walk humbly and closely with God.

"Q. 20. May not some of them have a testimony from the Spirit that they shall not finally fall from God?

"A. They may. And this persuasion, that neither life nor death shall separate them from him, far from being hurtful, may in some circumstances be extremely useful. These, therefore, we should in nowise grieve, but earnestly encourage them to 'hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end.'

"Q. 21. But have any a testimony from the Spirit that they shall never sin?

"A. We know not what God may vouchsafe to some particular persons, but we do not find any general state described in Scripture from which a man cannot draw back to sin. If there were any state wherein this was impossible, it would be that of these who are sanctified, who are 'fathers in Christ, who rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks;' but it is not impossible for these to draw back. They who are sanctified yet may fall and perish (Heb. x, 29). Even fathers in Christ need that warning: 'Love not the world' (1 John ii, 15). They who 'rejoice, pray,' and 'give thanks without ceasing' may, nevertheless, 'quench the Spirit' (1 Thess. v, 16, etc.). Nay, even they who are 'sealed unto the day of redemption' may yet 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God' (Eph. iv, 30).

"Although, therefore, God may give such a witness to some particular persons, yet it is not to be expected by Christians in general; there being no Scripture whereon to ground such an expectation.

"Q. 22. By what 'fruit of the Spirit' may we 'know that we are of God,' even in the highest sense?

"A. By love, joy, peace, always abiding; by invariable long-suffering, patience, resignation; by gentleness, triumphing over all provocation; by goodness, mildness, sweetness, tenderness of spirit; by fidelity, simplicity, Godly sincerity; by meekness, calmness, evenness of spirit; by temperance, not only in food and sleep, but in all things natural and spiritual.

"Q. 23. But what great matter is there in this? Have we not all this when we are justified?

"A. What, total resignation to the will of God, without any mixture of self-will? gentleness, without any touch of anger, even the moment we are provoked? love to God, without the least love to the creature, but in and for God, excluding all pride? love to man, excluding all envy, all jealousy, and rash judging? meekness, keeping the whole soul inviolably calm? and temperance in all things? Deny that any ever came up to this, if you please; but do not say all who are justified do.

"Q. 24. But some who are newly justified do. What, then, will you say to these?

"A. If they really do, I will say they are sanctified, saved from sin in that moment; and that they never need lose what God has given, or feel sin any more.

"But certainly this is an exempt case. It is otherwise with the generality of those that are justified: they feel in themselves more or less pride, anger, self-will, a heart bent to backsliding. And till they have gradually mortified these they are not fully renewed in love.

"Q. 25. But is not this the case of all that are justified? Do they not gradually die to sin and grow in grace, till at, or perhaps a little before death, God perfects them in love?

"A. I believe this is the case of most, but not all. God usually gives a considerable time for men to receive light, to grow in grace, to do and suffer his will, before they are either justified or sanctified; but he does not invariably adhere to this; sometimes he 'cuts short his work;' he does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have done or suffered nothing, and who have not had time for a gradual growth either in light or grace. And 'may he not do what he will with his own? Is thine eye evil because he is good?'

"It need not, therefore, be affirmed over and over, and proved by forty texts of Scripture either, that most men are perfected in love at last, that there is a gradual work of God in the soul, or that, generally speaking, it is a long time, even many years, before sin is destroyed. All this we know; but we know likewise that God may, with man's good leave, 'cut short his work,' in whatever degree he pleases, and do the usual work of many years in a moment. He does so in many instances, and yet there is a gradual work both before and after that moment; so that one may affirm the work is gradual; another, it is instantaneous, without any manner of contradiction.

"Q. 26. Does St. Paul mean any more by being 'sealed with the Spirit,' than being 'renewed in love?'

"A. Perhaps in one place (2 Cor. i, 29) he does not mean so much; but in another (Eph. i, 13) he seems to include both the fruit and the witness; and that in a higher degree than we experience even when we are first 'renewed in love:' God 'sealeth us with the Spirit of promise,' by giving us 'the full assurance of hope;' such a confidence of receiving all the promises of God as excludes the possibility of doubting; with that Holy Spirit, by universal holiness, stamping the whole image of God on our hearts.

"Q. 27. But how can those who are thus sealed 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God?'

"A. St. Paul tells you very particularly, (1) By such conversation as is not profitable, not to the use of edifying, not apt to minister grace to the hearers. (2) By relapsing into bitterness or want of kindness. (3) By wrath, lasting displeasure, or want of tender-heartedness. (4) By anger, however soon it is over; want of instantly forgiving one another. (5) By clamor or bawling, loud, harsh, rough speak-

ing. (6) By evil-speaking, whispering, tale-bearing; needlessly mentioning the fault of an absent person, though in ever so soft a manner.

"Q. 28. What do you think of those in London who seem to have been lately 'renewed in love?'

"A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin; whereas these were emptied of sin first and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner to make his work more plain and undeniable, and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love which is often felt even in a justified state.

"It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise: 'From all your filthiness will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and new a spirit will I put within you' (Ezek. xxxvi, 25, 26).

"But I do not think of them all alike; there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these I believe are renewed in love, and have the direct witness of it; and they manifest the fruit above described in all their words and actions. Now, let any man call this what he will; it is what I call perfection.

"But some who have much love, peace, and joy yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have are, nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say; perhaps one in ten, perhaps more or fewer. But some are undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in every thing give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy, at least, not always happy; for sometimes they complain. They say this or that is hard!

"Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction without the appearance, at least, of resentment. If they are reprov'd or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reprov'd or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness, with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly when they reprove others, and behave roughly to their inferiors.

"Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behavior; and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without respect of persons; particularly to them that are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long study, endeavor, by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned; perhaps they make them so, and then wipe their mouths and say, 'Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.'

"Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

"Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due proportion—they have too much

of one, too little of another—or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

“Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigor of the body; or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind: otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour; or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul; or they use neither fasting nor abstinence; or they prefer (which are so many sorts of intemperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation which gives them transient joy and comfort before that which brings godly sorrow or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to and terminate in the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not center in God, but rather in itself.

“So far all is plain. I believe you have faith and love and joy and peace. Yet you who are particularly concerned know each for yourself that you are wanting in the respects above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

“You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

“Q. 29. Can those who are perfect grow in grace?

“A. Undoubtedly they can; and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

“Q. 30. Can they fall from it?

“A. I am well assured they can; matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought one saved from sin could not fall; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit and the witness, but they have now lost both. Neither does any one stand by virtue of any thing that is implied in the nature of the state. There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that cannot fall, this wholly depends on the promise of God.

“Q. 31. Can those who fall from this state recover it?

“A. Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common thing for persons to lose it more than once before they are established therein.

“It is, therefore, to guard them who are saved from sin, from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

“I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet, like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weaknesses are far less than might have been expected, and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself, no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober-minded men who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just the contrary to what ought to have been) the opposition is great, the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others, and some who at first began to run well are turned out of the way.

CAUTIONS AND DIRECTIONS.

"Q. 32. What is the first advice * that you would give them ?

"A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God hast cast it out, see that it enter no more : it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares ; especially if you think there is no danger of it. 'Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God.' So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride not only to ascribe any thing we have to ourselves, but to think we have what we really have not. Mr. L., for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble ; but then he thought he had more light than any man living, and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God, and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have, or if you think you are so taught of God as no longer to need man's teaching, pride lieth at the door. Yes ; you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one another, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London ; yea, by all men. For God sendeth by whom he will send.

"Do not, therefore, say to any who would advise or reprove you, 'You are blind ; you cannot teach me.' Do not say, 'This is your wisdom, your carnal reason ;' but calmly weigh the thing before God.

"Always remember much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together. As there may be much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye, yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together that none may say to another, 'I have no need of thee.'

"To imagine none can teach you but those who are themselves saved from sin is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment ; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No ; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard 'them that are over you in the Lord,' and do not think you know better than them. Know their place and your own ; always remembering much love does not imply much light.

"The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O, beware of the appearance, and the thing ! Let there 'be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus.' And 'be ye likewise clothed in humility.' Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self-diffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do show that you are little and base and mean and vile in your own eyes.

"As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God ; no, it will farther it. Be, therefore, open and frank when you are taxed with any thing ; do not seek to evade or disguise it ; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder but adorn the Gospel.

* The advices which follow were published in a separate tract, in the year 1762, under the title of *Cautions and Directions given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies*, with the following motto :

"Set the false witnesses aside,
Yet hold the truth forever fast."

It was evidently intended to guard the people against the mischievous extravagances of George Bell and his friends, a particular account of whom is given in Mr. Wesley's Journal about that period.—EDITOR.

"Q. 33. What is the second advice which you would give them?

"A. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O, keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, 'believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God.' Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

"I advise you never to use the words wisdom, reason, or knowledge by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless knowledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff, but not the wheat.

"One general inlet to enthusiasm is expecting the ends without the means; the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

"Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, 'God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. Therefore, I have no need to read it.' Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O, take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ and keep in the good old way which was 'once delivered to the saints;' the way that even a heathen bore testimony of: 'That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.'

"The very desire of 'growing in grace' may sometimes be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new, besides new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind after a new heart, as, (1) The loving God with all our mind. (2) With all our soul. (3) With all our strength. (4) Oneness with God. (5) Oneness with Christ. (6) Having our life hid with Christ in God. (7) Being dead with Christ. (8) Rising with him. (9) The sitting with him in heavenly places. (10) The being taken up into his throne. (11) The being in the new Jerusalem. (12) The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men. (13) The being dead to all works. (14) The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

"One ground of many of these mistakes is the taking every fresh, strong application of any of these Scriptures to the heart to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these Scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

"Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes is the not considering deeply that love is the highest gift of God—humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with or infinitely inferior to it.

"It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this—the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for any thing but more love you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, 'Have you received this or that blessing?' if you mean any thing but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it, then, in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians. You can go no higher than this till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

"I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet. Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no scriptural way of judging. O, keep close to 'the law and to the testimony!'

"Q. 34. What is the third?

"A. Beware of Antinomianism; 'making void the law,' or any part of it, 'through faith.' Enthusiasm naturally leads to this; indeed, they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of every thing, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that 'Christ is the end of the law,' may betray us into it if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, 'Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self-examination.' Let us 'magnify the law,' the whole written word, 'and make it honorable.' Let this be our voice: 'I prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. O, what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.' Beware of Antinomian books; particularly the works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things, and this makes them the more dangerous. O, be warned in time! Do not play with fire. Do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice's den. I entreat you beware of bigotry. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists, so-called, only; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love; or to those who believe yours and their report. O, make not this your Shibboleth! Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many: 'You have received,' says one, 'a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that, so you lost it. You should have been still.'

"Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censoriousness; thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or 'enemies to the work.' Once more, beware of Solifidianism; crying nothing but 'Believe, believe!' and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honor all men. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in our hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in

general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of 'whatsoever is lovely.' And this with the greatest propriety; for as 'by works faith is made perfect,' so the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favor or suffering the displeasure of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience.

"Q. 35. What is the fourth?

"A. Beware of sins of omission; lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works; willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men. Particularly, 'thou shalt in any wise reprove thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.' Be active. Give no place to indolence or sloth; give no occasion to say, 'Ye are idle, ye are idle.' Many will say so still; but let your whole spirit and behavior refute the slander. Be always employed; lose no shred of time; gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. And whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. Be 'slow to speak' and wary in speaking. 'In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin.' Do not talk much; neither long at a time. Few can converse profitably above an hour. Keep at the utmost distance from pious chit-chat, from religious gossiping.

"Q. 36. What is the fifth?

"A. Beware of desiring any thing but God. Now you desire nothing else; every other desire is driven out; see that none enter again. 'Keep thyself pure;' let your 'eye' remain 'single, and your whole body shall be full of light.' Admit no desire of pleasing food or any other pleasure of sense; no desire of pleasing the eye or the imagination by any thing grand or new or beautiful; no desire of money, of praise, or esteem; of happiness in any creature. You may bring these desires back, but you need not; you need feel them no more. O, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free!

"Be patterns to all of denying yourselves and taking up your cross daily. Let them see that you make no account of any pleasure which does not bring you nearer to God, nor regard any pain which does; that you simply aim at pleasing him, whether by doing or suffering; that the constant language of your heart, with regard to pleasure or pain, honor or dishonor, riches or poverty, is,

"All's alike to me, so I
In my Lord may live and die!"

"Q. 37. What is the sixth?

"A. Beware of schism, of making a rent in the Church of Christ. That inward disunion, the members ceasing to have a reciprocal love 'one for another' (1 Cor. xii, 25), is the very root of all contention and every outward separation. Beware of every thing tending thereto. Beware of a dividing spirit; shun whatever has the least aspect that way. Therefore, say not, 'I am of Paul or of Apollos;' the very thing which occasioned the schism at Corinth. Say not, 'This is my preacher; the best preacher in England. Give me him, and take all the rest.' All this tends to breed or foment division, to disunite those whom God hath joined. Do not despise or run down any preacher; do not exalt any one above the rest, lest you hurt both him and the cause of God. On the other hand, do not bear hard upon any by reason of some incoherency or inaccuracy of expression; no, nor for some mistakes, were they really such.

"Likewise, if you would avoid schism, observe every rule of the society and of the bands, for conscience' sake. Never omit meeting your class or band; never

absent yourself from any public meeting. These are the very sinews of our society, and whatever weakens, or tends to weaken, our regard for these, or our exactness in attending them, strikes at the very root of our community. As one saith, 'That part of our economy, the private weekly meetings for prayer, examination, and particular exhortation, has been the greatest means of deepening and confirming every blessing that was received by the word preached, and of diffusing it to others who could not attend the public ministry; whereas, without this religious connection and intercourse, the most ardent attempts, by mere preaching, have proved of no lasting use.'

"Suffer not one thought of separating from your brethren, whether their opinions agree with yours or not. Do not dream that any man sins in not believing you, in not taking your word; or that this or that opinion is essential to the work, and both must stand or fall together. Beware of impatience of contradiction. Do not condemn or think hardly of those who cannot see just as you see, or who judge it their duty to contradict you, whether in a great thing or a small. I fear some of us have thought hardly of others, merely because they contradicted what we affirmed. All this tends to division; and by every thing of this kind we are teaching them an evil lesson against themselves.

"O, beware of touchiness, of testiness, not bearing to be spoken to; starting at the least word; and flying from those who do not implicitly receive mine or another's sayings!

"Expect contradiction and opposition, together with crosses of various kinds. Consider the words of St. Paul: 'To you it is given, in the behalf of Christ,' for his sake, as a fruit of his death and intercession for you, 'not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake' (Phil. i. 29). *It is given!* God gives you this opposition or reproach; it is a fresh token of his love. And will you disown the Giver; or spurn his gift, and count it a misfortune? Will you not rather say, 'Father, the hour is come, that thou shouldest be glorified; now thou givest thy child to suffer something for thee; do with me according to thy will?' Know that these things, far from being hinderances to the work of God or to the soul, unless by your own fault, are not only unavoidable in the course of providence, but profitable, yea, necessary for you. Therefore, receive them from God (not from chance) with willingness, with thankfulness. Receive them from men with humility, meekness, yieldingness, gentleness, sweetness. Why should not even your outward appearance and manner be soft? Remember the character of Lady Cutts: 'It was said of the Roman Emperor Titus, Never any one came displeased from him. But it might be said of her, Never any one went displeased to her, so secure were all of the kind and favorable reception which they would meet with from her.'

"Beware of tempting others to separate from you. Give no offense which can possibly be avoided; see that your practice be in all things suitable to your profession, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Be particularly careful in speaking of yourself: you may not, indeed, deny the work of God, but speak of it when you are called thereto in the most inoffensive manner possible. Avoid all magnificent, pompous words: indeed, you need give it no general name; neither perfection, sanctification, the second blessing, nor the having attained. Rather speak of the particulars which God has wrought for you. You may say, 'At such a time I felt a change which I am not able to express, and since that time I have not felt pride or self-will or anger or unbelief, nor any thing but a fullness of love to God and to all mankind.' And answer any other plain question that is asked with modesty and simplicity.

"And if any of you should at any time fall from what you now are, if you should again feel pride or unbelief, or any temper from which you are now delivered, do not deny, do not hide, do not disguise it at all, at the peril of your soul. At all events, go to one in whom you can confide, and speak just what you feel. God will enable him to speak a word in season which shall be health to your soul. And surely he will again lift up your head and cause the bones that have been broken to rejoice.

"Q. 38. What is the last advice that you would give them?

"A. Be exemplary in all things, particularly in outward things (as in dress), in little things, in the laying out of your money (avoiding every needless expense), in deep, steady seriousness, and in the solidity and usefulness of all your conversation. So shall you be 'a light shining in a dark place.' So shall you daily 'grow in grace,' till an entrance be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Most of the preceding advices are strongly enforced in the following reflections, which I recommend to your deep and frequent consideration, next to the Holy Scriptures :

"(1) The sea is an excellent figure of the fullness of God and that of the blessed Spirit. For as the rivers all return into the sea, so the bodies, the souls, and the good works of the righteous return unto God, to live there in his eternal repose.

"Although all the graces of God depend on his mere bounty, yet is he pleased generally to attach them to the prayers, the instructions, and the holiness of those with whom we are. By strong though invisible attractions he draws some souls through their intercourse with others.

"The sympathies formed by grace far surpass those formed by nature.

"The truly devout show that passions as naturally flow from true as from false love, so deeply sensible are they of the goods and evils of those whom they love for God's sake. But this can only be comprehended by those who understand the language of love.

"The bottom of the soul may be in repose even while we are in many outward troubles, just as the bottom of the sea is calm while the surface is strongly agitated.

"The first helps to growth in grace are the ill-usage, the affronts, and the losses which befall us. We should receive them with all thankfulness, as preferable to all others, were it only on this account, that our will has no part therein.

"The readiest way to escape from our sufferings is to be willing they should endure as long as God pleases.

"If we suffer persecution and affliction in a right manner, we attain a larger measure of conformity to Christ, by a due improvement of one of these occasions, than we could have done merely by imitating his mercy in abundance of good works.

"One of the greatest evidences of God's love to those that love him is to send them afflictions, with grace to bear them.

"Even in the greatest afflictions we ought to testify to God, that in receiving them from his hand we feel pleasure in the midst of the pain, from being afflicted by him who loves us and whom we love.

"The readiest way which God takes to draw a man to himself is to afflict him in that he loves most, and with good reason, and to cause this affliction to arise from some good action done with a single eye, because nothing can more clearly show him the emptiness of what is most lovely and desirable in the world.

"(2) True resignation consists in a thorough conformity to the whole will of God, who wills and does all (excepting sin) which comes to pass in the world. In order to this we have only to embrace all events, good and bad, as his will.

"In the greatest afflictions which can befall the just, either from heaven or earth, they remain immovable in peace, and perfectly submissive to God, by an inward, loving regard to him, uniting in one all the powers of their souls.

"We ought quietly to suffer whatever befalls us, to bear the defects of others and our own, to confess them to God in secret prayer or with groans which cannot be uttered; but never to speak a sharp or peevish word, nor to murmur or repine, but thoroughly willing that God should treat you in the manner that pleases him. We are his lambs, and therefore ought to be ready to suffer even to death without complaining.

"We are to bear with those we cannot amend, and to be content with offering them to God. This is true resignation. And since he has borne our infirmities, we may well bear those of each other for his sake.

"To abandon all, to strip one's self of all, in order to seek and to follow Jesus Christ naked to Bethlehem, where he was born; naked to the hall, where he was scourged; and naked to Calvary, where he died on the cross, is so great a mercy, that neither the thing nor the knowledge of it is given to any but through faith in the Son of God.

"(3) There is no love of God without patience, and no patience without lowliness and sweetness of spirit.

"Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love.

"Humility alone unites patience with love, without which it is impossible to draw profit from suffering, or, indeed, to avoid complaint, especially when we think we have given no occasion for what men make us suffer.

"True humility is a kind of self-annihilation, and this is the center of all virtues.

"A soul returned to God ought to be attentive to every thing which is said to him on the head of salvation, with a desire to profit thereby.

"Of the sins which God has pardoned, let nothing remain but a deeper humility in the heart, and a stricter regulation in our words, in our actions, and in our sufferings.

"(4) The bearing men and suffering evils in meekness and silence is the sum of a Christian life.

"God is the first object of our love; its next office is to bear the defects of others. And we should begin the practice of this amidst our own household.

"We should chiefly exercise our love toward them who most shock either our way of thinking, or our temper, or our knowledge, or the desire we have that others should be as virtuous as we wish to be ourselves.

"(5) God hardly gives his Spirit even to those whom he has established in grace if they do not pray for it on all occasions, not only once, but many times.

"God does nothing but in answer to prayer; and even they who have been converted to God without praying for it themselves (which is exceeding rare) were not without the prayers of others. Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer.

"On every occasion of uneasiness we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions without being in any pain about what success they may have.

"In the greatest temptations a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

"God's command to 'pray without ceasing' is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul, which can no more subsist one moment without it than the body can without air.

"Whether we think of or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer when we have no other object than his love and the desire of pleasing him.

"All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God, without either adding to or diminishing from it by his own choice.

"Prayer continues in the desire of the heart, though the understanding be employed on outward things.

"In souls filled with love the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

"As the furious hate which the devil bears us is termed the roaring of a lion, so our vehement love may be termed crying after God.

"God only requires of his adult children that their hearts be truly purified, and that they offer him continually the wishes and vows that naturally spring from perfect love. For these desires, being the genuine fruits of love, are the most perfect prayers that can spring from it.

"(6) It is scarce conceivable how strait the way is wherein God leads them that follow him; and how dependent on him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to him.

"It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are, and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

"As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin which is upon the heart will hinder its right motion toward God.

"We ought to be in the church as the saints are in heaven, and in the house as the holiest men are in the church, doing our work in the house as we pray in the church, worshipping God from the ground of the heart.

"We should be continually laboring to cut off all the useless things that surround us, and God usually retrenches the superfluities of our souls in the same proportion as we do those of our bodies.

"The best means of resisting the devil is to destroy whatever of the world remains in us, in order to raise for God upon its ruins a building all of love; then shall we begin in this fleeting life to love God as we shall love him in eternity.

"We scarce conceive how easy it is to rob God of his due, in our friendship with the most virtuous persons, until they are torn from us by death. But if this loss produce lasting sorrow, that is a clear proof that we had before two treasures, between which we divided our heart.

"(7) If, after having renounced all, we do not watch incessantly, and beseech God to accompany our vigilance with his, we shall be again entangled and overcome.

"As the most dangerous winds may enter at little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little unobserved incidents which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptations.

"It is good to renew ourselves from time to time by closely examining the state of our souls as if we had never done it before; for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith than to keep ourselves by this means in humility and the exercise of all good works.

"To continual watchfulness and prayer ought to be added continual employment. For grace fills a vacuum as well as nature, and the devil fills whatever God does not fill.

"There is no faithfulness like that which ought to be between a guide of souls and the person directed by him. They ought continually to regard each other in

God, and closely to examine themselves, whether all their thoughts are pure and all their works directed with Christian discretion. Other affairs are only the things of men, but these are peculiarly the things of God.

"(8) The words of St. Paul, 'No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,' show us the necessity of eyeing God in our good works and even in our minutest thoughts, knowing that none are pleasing to him but those which he forms in us and with us. From hence we learn that we cannot serve him unless he use our tongue, hands, and heart, to do by himself and his Spirit whatever he would have us to do.

"If we were not utterly impotent, our good works would be our own property; whereas, now they belong wholly to God, because they proceed from him and his grace; while raising our works and making them all divine, he honors himself in us through them.

"One of the principal rules of religion is to lose no occasion of serving God; and, since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve him in our neighbor, which he receives as if done to himself in person standing visibly before us.

"God does not love men that are inconstant, nor good works that are intermitted. Nothing is pleasing to him but what has a resemblance of his own immutability.

"A constant attention to the work which God intrusts us with is a mark of solid piety.

"Love fasts when it can and as much as it can. It leads to all the ordinances of God, and employs itself in all the outward works whereof it is capable. It flies, as it were, like Elijah over the plain, to find God upon his holy mountain.

"God is so great that he communicates greatness to the least thing that is done for his service.

"Happy are they who are sick, yea, or lose their life for having done a good work.

"God frequently conceals the part which his children have in the conversion of other souls. Yet one may boldly say that person who long groans before him for the conversion of another, whenever that soul is converted to God, is one of the chief causes of it.

"Charity cannot be practiced right unless, first, we exercise it the moment God gives the occasion; and, secondly, retire the instant after to offer it to God by humble thanksgiving. And this for three reasons: first, to render him what we have received from him; the second, to avoid the dangerous temptation which springs from the very goodness of these works; and the third, to unite ourselves to God, in whom the soul expands itself in prayer, with all the graces we have received and the good works we have done; to draw from him new strength against the bad effects which these very works may produce in us, if we do not make use of the antidotes which God has ordained against these poisons. The true means to be filled anew with the riches of grace is thus to strip ourselves of it, and without this it is extremely difficult not to grow faint in the practice of good works.

"Good works do not receive their last perfection till they, as it were, lose themselves in God. This is a kind of death to them resembling that of our bodies, which will not attain their highest life, their immortality, till they lose themselves in the glory of our souls, or rather of God, wherewith they shall be filled. And it is only what they had of earthly and mortal which good works lose by this spiritual death.

"Fire is the symbol of love, and the love of God is the principle and the end of all our good works. But truth surpasses figure, and the fire of divine love has this advantage over material fire, that it can re-ascend to its source, and raise thither with

it all the good works which it produces. And by this means it prevents their being corrupted by pride, vanity, or any evil mixture. But this cannot be done otherwise than by making these good works in a spiritual manner die in God by a deep gratitude, which plunges the soul in him as in an abyss, with all that it is and all the grace and works for which it is indebted to him; a gratitude whereby the soul seems to empty itself of them that they may return to their source, as rivers seem willing to empty themselves when they pour themselves with all their waters into the sea.

"When we have received any favor from God we ought to retire, if not into our closets, into our hearts, and say, 'I come, Lord, to restore to thee what thou hast given, and I freely relinquish it to enter again into my own nothingness. For what is the most perfect creature in heaven or earth in thy presence but a void capable of being filled with thee and by thee; as the air which is void and dark is capable of being filled with the light of the sun, who withdraws it every day to restore it the next, there being nothing in the air that either appropriates this light or resists it? O, give me the same facility of receiving and restoring thy grace and good works! I say *thine*, for I acknowledge the root from which they spring is in thee and not in me.'"

THE SUM OF THE DOCTRINE.

26. In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed in the following short propositions:

"(1) There is such a thing as perfection, for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.

"(2) It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to 'go on unto perfection' (Heb. vi, 1).

"(3) It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect (Phil. iii, 13).

"(4) It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to man, nor to angels, but to God alone.

"(5) It does not make a man infallible: none is infallible while he remains in the body.

"(6) Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is 'salvation from sin.'

"(7) It is 'perfect love' (1 John iv, 18). This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in every thing giving thanks (1 Thess. v, 16, etc.).

"(8) It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before.

"(9) It is amissible, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances. But we were not thoroughly convinced of this till five or six years ago.

"(10) It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work.

"(11) But is it in itself instantaneous or not? In examining this, let us go on step by step.

"An instantaneous change has been wrought in some believers: none can deny this.

"Since that change, they enjoy perfect love; they feel this, and this alone; they 'rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.' Now, this

is all that I mean by perfection; therefore, these are witnesses of the perfection which I preach.

“‘But in some this change was not instantaneous.’ They did not perceive the instant when it was wrought. It is often difficult to perceive the instant when a man dies; yet there is an instant in which life ceases. And if even sin ceases, there must be a last moment of its existence, and a first moment of our deliverance from it.

“‘But if they have this love now, they will lose it.’ They may; but they need not. And whether they do or no, they have it now; they now experience what we teach. They now are all love; they now rejoice, pray, and praise without ceasing.

“‘However, sin is only suspended in them; it is not destroyed.’ Call it which you please. They are all love to-day, and they take no thought for the morrow.

“‘But this doctrine has been much abused.’ So has that of justification by faith. But that is no reason for giving up either this or any other scriptural doctrine. ‘When you wash your child,’ as one speaks, ‘throw away the water; but do not throw away the child.’

“‘But those who think they are saved from sin say they have no need of the merits of Christ.’ They say just the contrary. Their language is,

‘Every moment, Lord, I need the merit of thy death!’

“They never before had so deep, so unspeakable a conviction of the need of Christ in all his offices as they have now.

“Therefore, all our preachers should make a point of preaching perfection to believers constantly, strongly, and explicitly; and all believers should mind this one thing, and continually agonize for it.”

27. I have now done what I proposed. I have given a plain and simple account of the manner wherein I first received the doctrine of perfection, and the sense wherein I received, and wherein I do receive and teach it to this day. I have declared the whole and every part of what I mean by that scriptural expression. I have drawn the picture of it at full length, without either disguise or covering. And I would now ask any impartial person, What is there so frightful therein? Whence is all this outcry which, for these twenty years and upward, has been made throughout the kingdom; as if all Christianity were destroyed, and all religion torn up by the roots? Why is it that the very name of perfection has been cast out of the mouths of Christians; yea, exploded and abhorred, as if it contained the most pernicious heresy? Why have the preachers of it been hooted at, like mad dogs, even by men that fear God; nay, and by some of their own children, some whom they, under God, had begotten through the Gospel? What reason is there for this, or what pretense? Reason, sound reason, there is none. It is impossible there should. But pretenses there are, and those in great abundance. Indeed, there is ground to fear that, with some who treat us thus, it is mere pretense; that it is no more than a copy of their

countenance from the beginning to the end. They wanted, they sought, occasion against me; and here they found what they sought. "This is Mr. Wesley's doctrine! He preaches perfection!" He does; yet this is not his doctrine any more than it is yours, or any one's else, that is a minister of Christ. For it is his doctrine, peculiarly, emphatically his; it is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Those are his words, not mine: *Εσεσθε ουν υμεις τελειοι, ωσπερ ο Πατηρ υμων ο εν τοις ουρανοις τελειος εστι*, "Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And who says ye shall not; or, at least, not till your soul is separated from the body? It is the doctrine of St. Paul, the doctrine of St. James, of St. Peter, and St. John; and no otherwise Mr. Wesley's than as it is the doctrine of every one who preaches the pure and the whole Gospel. I tell you, as plain as I can speak, where and when I found this. I found it in the oracles of God, in the Old and New Testaments; when I read them with no other view or desire but to save my own soul. But whosoever this doctrine is, I pray you, what harm is there in it? Look at it again; survey it on every side, and that with the closest attention. In one view it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all, our soul, body, and substance to God. In another view it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of him that created it. In yet another it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Now, take it in which of these views you please (for there is no material difference), and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765.

28. Now let this perfection appear in its native form, and who can speak one word against it? Will any dare to speak against loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves; against a renewal of heart, not only in part, but in the whole image of God? Who is he that will open his mouth against being cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit; or against having all the mind that was in Christ, and walking in all things as Christ walked? What man who calls himself a Christian has the hardiness to object to the devoting, not a part,

but all our soul, body, and substance to God? What serious man would oppose the giving God all our heart, and the having one design ruling all our tempers? I say, again, let this perfection appear in its own shape, and who will fight against it? It must be disguised before it can be opposed. It must be covered with a bear-skin first, or even the wild beasts of the people will scarce be induced to worry it. But whatever these do, let not the children of God any longer fight against the image of God. Let not the members of Christ say any thing against having the whole mind that was in Christ. Let not those who are alive to God oppose the dedicating all our life to him. Why should you who have his love shed abroad in your heart withstand the giving him all your heart? Does not all that is within you cry out, "O, who that loves can love enough?" What pity that those who desire and design to please him should have any other design or desire! much more, that they should dread, as a fatal delusion, yea, abhor, as an abomination to God, the having this one desire and design ruling every temper? Why should devout men be afraid of devoting all their soul, body, and substance to God? Why should those who love Christ count it a damnable error to think we may have all the mind that was in him? We allow, we contend, that we are justified freely through the righteousness and the blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us because we expect likewise to be sanctified wholly through his Spirit? We look for no favor either from the open servants of sin or from those who have only the form of religion. But how long will you who worship God in spirit, who are "circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands," set your battle in array against those who seek an entire circumcision of heart, who thirst to be cleansed "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," and to "perfect holiness in the fear of God?" Are we your enemies because we look for a full deliverance from that "carnal mind which is enmity against God?" Nay, we are your brethren, your fellow-laborers in the vineyard of our Lord, your companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. Although this we confess (if we are fools therein, yet as fools bear with us), we do expect to love God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Yea, we do believe that he will in this world so "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we shall perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name."

BRIEF THOUGHTS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Some thoughts occurred to my mind this morning concerning Christian perfection, and the manner and time of receiving it, which I believe may be useful to set down.

1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions.

I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility.

And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I do not object against it.

2. As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant.

But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

3. As to the time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before.

I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argument to the contrary.

If it must be many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many. *Pretium quotus arroget annus?* [What length of time will sanction it?]

And how many days or months, or even years, can any one allow to be between perfection and death? How far from justification must it be, and how near to death?

LONDON, January 27, 1767.

TO THE REVEREND MR. DODD.

February 5, 1756.

REVEREND SIR: I am favored with yours of January 26, for which I return you my sincere thanks. Your frank and open manner of writing is far from needing any apology, and I hope will never occasion your receiving such treatment from me, as I did from Mr. Law, who, after some very keen expressions, in answer to the second private letter I sent him, plainly told me he desired to hear "no more on that head." I do desire to hear, and am very willing to consider, whatever you have to advance on the head of Christian perfection.

When I began to make the Scriptures my chief study (about seven-and-twenty years ago) I began to see that Christians are called to love God with all their heart, and to serve him with all their strength; which is precisely what I apprehend to be meant by the scriptural term perfection. After weighing this for some years, I openly declared my sentiments before the university, in the sermon on the "Circumcision of the Heart," now printed among my sermons. About six years after, in consequence of an advice I received from Bishop Gibson, "Tell all the world what you mean by perfection," I published my coolest and latest thoughts in the sermon on that subject. You easily observe I therein build on no authority, ancient or modern, but the Scripture. If this supports any doctrine it will stand; if not, the sooner it falls the better. Neither the doctrine in question nor any other is any thing to me, unless it be the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. If, therefore, you will please to point out to me any passages in that sermon which are either contrary to Scripture or not supported by it, and to show that they are not, I shall be full as willing to oppose as ever I was to defend them. I search for truth, plain, Bible truth, without any regard to the praise or dispraise of men.

If you will assist me in this search, more especially by showing me where I have mistaken my way, it will be gratefully acknowledged by, reverend sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

AN ANSWER TO THE REVEREND MR. DODD.*

1. You and I may the more easily bear with each other because we are both of us rapid writers, and therefore the more liable to mistake. I will thank you for showing me any mistake I am in, being not so tenacious of my opinions now as I was twenty or thirty years ago. Indeed, I am not fond of any opinion as such. I read the Bible with what attention I can, and regulate all my opinions thereby to the best of my understanding. But I am always willing to receive more light; particularly with regard to any less common opinions, because the explaining and defending of them takes up much time, which I can ill spare from

* At what time this answer was written, it is perhaps impossible exactly to ascertain. It appears to have been sent as a private letter to Mr. Dodd, before he had become a Doctor of Divinity, and not to have been published till the year 1782, when it was inserted in the *Arminian Magazine*—EDITOR.

other employments. Whoever, therefore, will give me more light with regard to Christian perfection will do me a singular favor. The opinion I have concerning it at present I espouse merely because I think it is scriptural. If, therefore, I am convinced it is not scriptural, I shall willingly relinquish it.

2. I have no particular fondness for the term. It seldom occurs either in my preaching or writings. It is my opponents who thrust it upon me continually, and ask me what I mean by it. So did Bishop Gibson till, by his advice, I publicly declared what I did not mean by it, and what I did. This I supposed might be best done in the form of a sermon, having a text prefixed, wherein that term occurred. But that text is there used only as an occasion or introduction to the subject. I do not build any doctrine thereupon, nor undertake critically to explain it.

3. What is the meaning of the term perfection? is another question; but that it is a scriptural term is undeniable. Therefore, none ought to object to the use of the term, whatever they may do to this or that explication of it. I am very willing to consider whatever you have to object to what is advanced under the first head of that sermon. But I still think that perfection is only another term for holiness, or the image of God in man. "God made man perfect," I think is just the same as, "He made him holy," or "in his own image;" and you are the first person I ever read of or spoke with who made any doubt of it. Now, this perfection does certainly admit of degrees. Therefore, I readily allow the propriety of that distinction, perfection of kinds, and perfection of degrees. Nor do I remember one writer, ancient or modern, who excepts against it.

4. In the Sermon of "Salvation by Faith," I say, "He that is born of God sinneth not" (a proposition explained at large in another sermon, and every-where either explicitly or virtually connected with, "while he keepeth himself"), "by any sinful desire; any unholy desire he stifeth in the birth." (Assuredly he does, "while he keepeth himself.") "Nor doth he sin by infirmities; for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will, and without this they are not properly sins." Taking the words as they lie in connection thus (and taken otherwise they are not my words, but yours), I must still aver they speak both my own experience and that of many hundred children of God whom I personally know. And all this, with abundantly more than this, is contained in that single expression, "The loving God with all our heart, and serving him with all our strength." Nor did I ever say or mean any

more by perfection than thus loving and serving God. But I dare not say less than this, for it might be attended with worse consequences than you seem to be aware of. If there be a mistake, it is far more dangerous on the one side than on the other. If I set the mark too high, I drive men into needless fears; if you set it too low, you drive them into hell fire.

5. We agree that true "Christianity implies a destruction of the kingdom of sin and a renewal of the soul in righteousness, which even babes in Christ do in a measure experience, though not in so large a measure as young men and fathers." But here we divide. I believe even babes in Christ, "while they keep themselves do not commit sin." By sin I mean outward sin, and the word *commit* I take in its plain, literal meaning. And this, I think, is fully proved by all the texts cited by me from the sixth chapter to the Romans. Nor do I conceive there is any material difference between committing sin and continuing therein. I tell my neighbor here, "William, you are a child of the devil, for you commit sin; you was drunk yesterday." "No, sir," says the man; "I do not live or continue in sin" (which Mr. Dodd says is the true meaning of the text); "I am not drunk continually, but only now and then, once in a fortnight or once in a month." Now, sir, how shall I deal with this man? Shall I tell him he is in the way to heaven or hell? I think he is in the high road to destruction, and that if I tell him otherwise his blood will be upon my head. And all that you say of living, continuing in, serving sin, as different from committing it, and of its not reigning, not having dominion over him who still frequently commits it, is making so many loop-holes whereby any impenitent sinner may escape from all the terrors of the Lord. I dare not, therefore, give up the plain, literal meaning either of St. Paul's or St. Peter's words.

6. As to those of St. John, cited by me, I do not think you have proved they are not to be taken literally. In every single act of obedience, as well as in a continued course of it, *ποιεῖ δικαιοσύνην* [he doeth righteousness]; and in either an act or a course of sin, *ποιεῖ ἁμαρτίαν* [he doeth sin]. Therefore, that I may give no countenance to any kind or degree of sin, I still interpret these words by those in the fifth chapter, and believe, "he that is born of God" (while he keepeth himself) "sinneth not;" doth not commit outward sin.

7. But "it is absolutely necessary," as you observe, "to add sometimes explanatory words to those of the sacred penman." It

is so; to add words explanatory of their sense, but not subversive of it. The words added to this text, "Ye know all things," are such; and you yourself allow them so to be. But I do not allow the words willfully and habitually to be such. These do not explain but overthrow the text. That the first fathers thus explained it I deny; as also that I ever spoke lightly of them.

8. You proceed: "You allow in another sermon, in evident contradiction to yourself, that the true children of God could and did commit sin." This is no contradiction to any thing I ever advanced. I every-where allow that a child of God can and will commit sin if he does not keep himself. "But this," you say, "is nothing to the present argument." Yes; it is the whole thing. If they keep themselves, they do not; otherwise, they can and do commit sin. I say nothing contrary to this in either sermon. But "hence," you say, "we conclude that he who is born of God may possibly commit sin"—an idle conclusion as ever was formed; for who ever denied it? I flatly affirm it in both the sermons and in the very paragraph now before us. The only conclusion which I deny is that "all Christians do and will commit sin as long as they live." Now, this you yourself (though you seem to start at it) maintain from the beginning of your letter to the end, namely, that all Christians do sin, and cannot but sin, more or less, to their lives' end. Therefore, I do not "artfully put this conclusion," but it is your own conclusion, from your own premises. Indeed, were I artfully to put in any thing in expounding the word of God, I must be an arrant knave. But I do not; my conscience bears me witness that I speak the very truth, so far as I know it, in simplicity and godly sincerity.

9. I think that all this time you are directly pleading for looseness of manners, and that every thing you advance naturally tends thereto. This is my grand objection to that doctrine of the necessity of sinning; not only that it is false, but that it is directly subversive of all holiness. The doctrine of the Gnostics was, not that a child of God does not commit sin—that is, act the things which are forbidden in Scripture—but that they are not sin in him, that he is a child of God still; so they contend, not for sinless, but sinful perfection; just as different from what I contend for as heaven is from hell. What the Donatists were I do not know; but I suspect they were the real Christians of that age, and were therefore served by St. Augustine and his warm adherents, as the Methodists are now by their zealous adversaries. It is extremely easy to blacken; and could I give myself

leave, I could paint the consequences of your doctrine in at least as dark and odious colors as you could paint mine.

10. The passage of St. Peter mentioned in the sermons I still think proves all which I brought it to prove.

“But you allow (Sermon xxii) that Paul and Barnabas did commit sin. And these were, without all controversy, fathers in Christ.” That is, not without controversy—that either Barnabas when he left Paul, or Peter when he dissembled at Antioch, was at that time a father in Christ in St. John’s sense; though by office undoubtedly they were. Their example, therefore, only proves what no one denies, namely, that if a believer keeps not himself he may commit sin. Would the conclusions here drawn “be made only by a very weak opponent?” Then you are a weak opponent; for you make them all, either from these or other premises; for you believe and maintain, (1) That all the other apostles committed sins sometimes. (2) That all the other Christians of the apostolic age sometimes committed sin. (3) That all other Christians in all ages do and will commit sin as long as they live. And, (4) That every man must commit sin—cannot help it—as long as he is in the body. You cannot deny one of these propositions, if you understand your own premises. I am, reverend sir,

Your affectionate brother,

J. WESLEY.

MR. WESLEY’S PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

Journal, Sunday, Dec. 2, 1744.—I was with two persons who believe they are saved from all sin. Be it so or not, why should we not rejoice in the work of God, so far as it is unquestionably wrought in them? For instance, I ask John C., “Do you pray always? Do you rejoice in God every moment? Do you in every thing give thanks? In loss, in pain, in sickness, weariness, disappointments? Do you desire nothing? Do you fear nothing? Do you feel the love of God continually in your heart? Have you a witness in whatever you speak or do that it is pleasing to God?” If he can solemnly and deliberately answer in the affirmative, why do I not rejoice and praise God on his behalf? Perhaps because I have an exceeding complex idea of sanctification or a sanctified man. And so, for fear he should not have attained all I include in that idea, I cannot rejoice in what he has attained.

Sunday, Dec. 23, 1744.—I was unusually lifeless and heavy

till the love-feast in the evening, when, just as I was constraining myself to speak, I was stopped, whether I would or no ; for the blood gushed out of both my nostrils, so that I could not add another word ; but in a few minutes it stayed, and all our hearts and mouths were opened to praise God. Yet the next day I was again as a dead man ; but in the evening, while I was reading prayers at Snowfields, I found such light and strength as I never remember to have had before. I saw every thought, as well as every action or word, just as it was rising in my heart ; and whether it was right before God or tainted with pride or selfishness. I never knew before (I mean not as at this time) what it was "to be still before God."

Tuesday, 25.—I waked, by the grace of God, in the same spirit ; and about eight, being with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe and tender sense of the presence of God as greatly confirmed me therein ; so that God was before me all the day long. I sought and found him in every place, and could truly say, when I lay down at night, "Now I have *lived* a day."

Friday, Oct. 29, 1762.—I left Bristol, and the next day came to London.

Monday, Nov. 1.—I went down to Canterbury. Here I seriously reflected on some late occurrences ; and, after weighing the matter thoroughly, wrote as follows :

"Without any preface or ceremony, which is needless between you and me, I will simply and plainly tell what I dislike in your doctrine, spirit, or outward behavior. When I say yours, I include Brothers Bell and Owen, and those who are most closely connected with them.

"1. I like your doctrine of perfection, or pure love ; love excluding sin ; your insisting that it is merely by faith ; that consequently it is instantaneous (though preceded and followed by a gradual work), and that it may be now, at this instant.

"But I dislike your supposing man may be as perfect as an angel, that he can be absolutely perfect, that he can be infallible or above being tempted, or that the moment he is pure in heart he cannot fall from it. I dislike the saying this was not known or taught among us till within two or three years. I grant you did not know it. You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification to me ; but I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings show) above these twenty years. I dislike your directly or indirectly depreciating justification, saying a justified person is not in Christ, is not born of God, is not a new creature, has not a new heart, is not sanctified, not a temple of the Holy Ghost, or that he cannot please God, or cannot grow in grace. I dislike your saying that one saved from sin needs nothing more than looking to Jesus, needs not to hear or think of any thing else ; believe, believe, is enough ; that he needs no self-examination, no times of private prayer, needs not mind little or outward things, and that he

cannot be taught by any person who is not in the same state. I dislike your affirming that justified persons in general persecute them that are saved from sin, that they have persecuted you on this account, and that for two years past you have been more persecuted by the two brothers than ever you was by the world in all your life.

"2. As to your spirit, I like your confidence in God and your zeal for the salvation of souls.

"But I dislike something which has the appearance of pride, of overvaluing yourselves and undervaluing others, particularly the preachers, thinking not only that they are blind, and that they are not sent of God, but even that they are dead; dead to God and walking in the way to hell; that they are going one way, you another; that they have no life in them. Your speaking of yourselves as though you were the only men who knew and taught in the Gospel, and as if not only all the clergy, but all Methodists besides, were in utter darkness. I dislike something that has the appearance of enthusiasm, overvaluing feelings and inward impressions, mistaking the work of imagination for the voice of the Spirit, expecting the end without the means, and undervaluing reason, knowledge, and wisdom in general. I dislike something that has the appearance of Antinomianism, not magnifying the law and making it honorable; not enough valuing tenderness of conscience and exact watchfulness in order thereto, using faith rather as contradistinguished from holiness than as productive of it.

"But what I most of all dislike is your littleness of love to your brethren, to your own society; your want of union of heart with them, and bowels of mercy toward them; your want of meekness, gentleness, long-suffering; your impatience of contradiction; your counting every man your enemy that reproves or admonishes you in love; your bigotry and narrowness of spirit, loving in a manner only those that love you; your censoriousness, proneness to think hardly of all who do not exactly agree with you—in one word, your divisive spirit. Indeed, I do not believe that any of you either design or desire a separation; but you do not enough fear, abhor, and detest it, shuddering at the very thought. And all the preceding tempers tend to it, and gradually prepare you for it. Observe, I tell you before. God grant that you may immediately and affectionately take warning!

LETTER TO MRS. ELIZABETH BENNIS, OF LIMERICK.

MANCHESTER, *March 29, 1766.*

MY DEAR SISTER: One of our preachers has lately advanced a new position among us—that there is no direct or immediate witness of sanctification, but only a perception or consciousness that we are changed, filled with love, and cleansed from sin. But, if I understand you right, you find a direct testimony that you are a child of God.

Now, certainly, if God has given you this light he did not intend that you should hide it under a bushel. "It is good to conceal the secrets of a king, but it is good to tell the loving-kindness of the Lord." Every one ought to declare what God has done for his soul, and that with all simplicity; only care is to be

taken to declare to several persons that part of our experience which they are severally able to bear; and some parts of it to such alone as are upright and simple of heart.

One reason why those who are saved from sin should freely declare it to believers is because nothing is a stronger incitement to them to seek after the same blessing. And we ought, by every possible means, to press every serious believer to forget the things which are behind, and with all earnestness go on to perfection. Indeed, if they are not thirsting after this it is scarcely possible to keep what they have; they can hardly retain any power of faith if they are not panting after holiness.

A thousand infirmities are consistent even with the highest degree of holiness, which is no other than pure love, a heart devoted to God; one design and one desire. Then, whatever is done, either in word or deed, may be done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Press after all the residue of promises. I am, my dear sister,
Your affectionate brother.

LETTER TO LADY —.

LONDON, *June 19, 1771.*

MY DEAR LADY: Many years since I saw that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” I began following after it, and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same.

Ten years after God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way how to attain this, namely, by a faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, “We are saved from sin, we are made holy by faith.” This I testified in private, in public, in print, and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this for above thirty years, and God hath continued to confirm the word of his grace. But during this time well nigh all the religious world hath set themselves in array against me, and among the rest many of my own children, following the example of one of my eldest sons, Mr. W. Their general cry has been, “He is unsound in the faith; he preaches another gospel!” I answer, Whether it be the same which they preach or not, it is the same which I have preached for above thirty years. This may easily appear from what I have published during that whole term. I instance only in three sermons: that on “Salvation by Faith,” printed in the year 1738; that on “The Lord our Righteousness,” printed a few years since;

and that on Mr. Whitefield's funeral, printed only some months ago. But it is said, "O, but you printed ten lines in August last which contradict all your other writings." Be not so sure of this. It is probable, at least, that I understand my own meaning as well as you do, and that meaning I have yet again declared in the sermon last referred to. By that interpret those ten lines, and you will understand them better. Although I should think that any one might see, even without this help, that the lines in question do not refer to the condition of obtaining, but of continuing in, the favor of God. But whether the sentiment contained in those lines be right or wrong, and whether it be well or ill expressed, the Gospel which I now preach God does still confirm by new witnesses in every place; perhaps never so much in this kingdom as within these last three months. Now, I argue from glaring, undeniable fact, God cannot bear witness to a lie. The Gospel, therefore, which he confirms must be true in substance. There may be opinions maintained at the same time which are not exactly true; and who can be secure from these? Perhaps I thought myself so once. When I was much younger than I am now, I thought myself almost infallible; but, I bless God, I know myself better now.

LETTER TO MISS CHAPMAN.

NEAR LONDON, *February*, 25, 1774.

MY DEAR SISTER: I should have been glad to see you at Newbury; but the will of our Lord is best.

You can never speak too strongly or explicitly upon the head of Christian perfection. If you speak only faintly and indirectly, none will be offended and none profited. But if you speak out, although some will probably be angry, yet others will soon find the power of God unto salvation. You have good encouragement from the experience of her whom God has lately taken to himself. Speak to all and spare not. Be instant in season, out of season, and pray always with all perseverance, particularly for

Yours affectionately.

LETTER TO MRS. CROSBY.

NEWCASTLE, *May* 11.

MY DEAR SISTER: Neither must the witness supersede the fruit, nor the fruit the witness, of the Spirit. Let other men talk this way or that, the word of the Lord shall stand.

I believe your spending a little time at P. may be of use.

Probably it will remove their prejudice against [Christian] perfection. But if Mr. T. has a mind to marry our friend, I think neither you nor I shall forward it. She is far happier, since she is free, so to abide.

Do you never find any tendency to pride? Do you find nothing like anger? Is your mind never ruffled, put out of tune? Do you never feel any useless desire, any desire of pleasure, of ease, of approbation, or increase of fortune? Do you find no stubbornness, sloth, or self-will, no unbelief?

Certainly the more freely you speak to me the better. I found what you said in your last helpful. It is of great use to have our minds stirred up by way of remembrance, even of the things which we know already. I speak of myself very little to any one, were it only for fear of hurting them. I have found exceeding few that could bear it. So I am constrained to repress my natural openness. I find scarcely any temptation from any thing in the world. My danger is from persons.

O, for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free!

Dear Sally, adieu!

LETTER TO MRS. HESTER ANN ROGERS.

LONDON, January 7, 1782.

MY DEAR HETTY: In the success of Mr. Leech's preaching we have one proof of a thousand that the blessing of God always attends the publishing of full salvation as attainable now by simple faith. You should always have in readiness that little tract, *The Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. There is nothing that would so effectually stop the mouths of those who call this "a new doctrine." All who thus object are really (though they suspect nothing less) seeking sanctification by works. If it be by works, then certainly these will need time in order to the doing of these works. But if it is by faith, it is plain a moment is a thousand years. Then God says (in the spiritual as the outward world), Let there be light, and there is light.

I am in great hopes, as J. S. got his own soul much quickened in Macclesfield, he will now be a blessing to many at Chester. A few witnesses of pure love remain there still; but several are gone to Abraham's bosom. Encourage those in M. who enjoy it to speak explicitly what they do experience, and go on till they know all that "love of God that passeth knowledge."

Give all the help you can, my dear Hetty, to them and to

Yours most affectionately.

From his Journal, 1775.—Many here have lately experienced the great salvation, and their zeal has been a general blessing. Indeed, this I always observe: wherever a work of sanctification breaks out the whole work of God prospers. Some are convinced of sin, others justified, and all stirred up to greater earnestness for salvation.

1778.—I returned to London, and Sunday, 11, buried the remains of Eleanor Lee. I believe she received the great promise of God, entire sanctification, fifteen or sixteen years ago, and that she never lost it for an hour. I conversed intimately with her ever since, and never saw her do any action, little or great, nor heard her speak any word which I could reprove. Thou wast indeed “a mother in Israel.”

1779.—When Mr. Brackenbury preached the old Methodist doctrine, one of them said, “You must not preach such doctrine here. The doctrine of perfection is not calculated for the meridian of Edinburgh.” Waiving, then, all other hinderances, is it any wonder that the work of God has not prospered here?

1781.—Indeed, you have already received a thousand blessings; but the greatest of all is yet behind—Christ in a pure and sinless heart, reigning the Lord of every motion there. It is good for you to hold fast what you have attained, and to be continually aspiring after this; and you will never find more life in your own soul than when you are earnestly exhorting others to go on unto perfection.

1782.—That point, entire salvation from inbred sin, can hardly ever be insisted upon, either in preaching or prayer, without a particular blessing. Honest Isaac Brown firmly believes this doctrine, that we are to be saved from all sin in this life. But I wish, when opportunity serves, you would encourage him, (1) To preach Christian perfection constantly, strongly, and explicitly; (2) Explicitly to assert and prove that it may be received now; and, (3) (which, indeed, is implied therein) That it is to be received by simple faith.

1785.—As long as you are yourself earnestly aspiring after a full deliverance from all sin, and a renewal in the whole image of God, God will prosper you in your labor; especially if you constantly and strongly exhort all believers to expect full salvation now by simple faith. And never be weary of well-doing; in due time you shall reap if you faint not!

1785.—Indeed, His work will flourish in every place where full sanctification is clearly and strongly preached.

1785.—And it will be well, as soon as any of them find peace with God, to exhort them to “go on to perfection.” The more explicitly and strongly you press all believers to aspire after full sanctification, as attainable now by simple faith, the more the whole work of God will prosper.

1786.—You do well insisting upon full and present salvation, whether men will hear or forbear.

1786.—We had a love-feast in the evening, at which many artlessly testified what God had done for their souls. I have not for many years known this society in so prosperous a condition. This is undoubtedly owing, first, to the exact discipline which has for some time been observed among them; and, next, to the strongly and continually exhorting the believers “to go on to perfection.”

1787.—It requires a great degree of watchfulness to retain the perfect love of God; and one great means of retaining it is frankly to declare what God has given you, and earnestly to exhort all the believers you meet with to follow after full salvation.

BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT.

1. The words, as literally translated as the English tongue will bear, run thus: “May the whole of you, the spirit and soul and body, be preserved blameless.”

What does St. Paul here mean by dividing man into three parts, “the spirit and soul and body?”

This creates what has been thought an insurmountable difficulty by those who argue thus:

“How is it possible to contradistinguish the soul both from the spirit and from the body? For it must be either material or immaterial, matter or not matter; there is no medium. But if it be matter, does it not coincide with the body? If it be not matter, does it not coincide with the spirit?”

But perhaps a way may be found of untying this knot, of unraveling this difficulty, by simply declaring the (at least probable) meaning of these three terms.

May not *the spirit* mean (so it has been understood by the Christians in all ages) the highest principle in man, the immortal

spirit made in the image of God, endued (as all spirits are, so far as we can conceive) with self-motion, understanding, will, and liberty?

Is not *the body* that portion of organized matter which every man receives in the womb, with which he is born into the world, and which he carries with him to the grave? At present it is connected with flesh and blood. But these are not the body. They are only the temporary clothing of the body, which it wholly puts off in the grave.

The soul seems to be the immediate clothing of the spirit, the vehicle with which it is connected from its first existence, and which is never separated from it, either in life or in death. Probably it consists of ethereal or electric fire, the purest of all matter. It does not seem to be affected by the death of the body, but envelopes the separate as it does the embodied spirit; neither will it undergo any essential change when it is clothed upon with the immortal body at the resurrection.

May not the apostle have an eye to this in those remarkable words: "We that are in this tabernacle" (this corruptible flesh and blood) "do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed" (divested of all covering, which belongs only to the Father of spirits), "but clothed upon" with the glorious resurrection-body, covering both our soul and spirit (2 Cor. v, 4). This will swallow up, totally destroy—*το θνητον*—*that which was mortal*, namely, the flesh and blood, which alone was liable to death.

If we understand the words of the apostle in this sense, all the difficulty vanishes away. We allow there can be no medium between material and immaterial. But still there is room for a wide and essential difference between the soul and the body; the latter implying that original portion of matter which is now clothed with flesh and blood; the former, that vehicle of ethereal fire which immediately covers the immortal spirit.

CONGLETON, *March 31, 1786.*

"WHAT IS AN ARMINIAN?"

1. To say, "This man is an Arminian," has the same effect on many hearers as to say, "This is a mad dog." It puts them into a fright at once: they run away from him with all speed and

diligence; and will hardly stop, unless it be to throw a stone at the dreadful and mischievous animal.

2. The more unintelligible the word is, the better it answers the purpose. Those on whom it is fixed know not what to do; not understanding what it means, they cannot tell what defense to make, or how to clear themselves from the charge. And it is not easy to remove the prejudice which others have imbibed, who know no more of it than that it is "something *very* bad," if not "*all* that is bad!"

3. To clear the meaning, therefore, of this ambiguous term, may be of use to many: to those who so freely pin this name upon others, that they may not say what they do not understand; to those that hear them, that they may be no longer abused by men's saying they know not what; and to those upon whom the name is fixed, that they may know how to answer for themselves.

4. It may be necessary to observe, first, that many confound Arminians with Arians. But this is entirely a different thing; the one has no resemblance to the other. An Arian is one who denies the Godhead of Christ; we scarce need say, the supreme, eternal Godhead, because there can be no God but the supreme, eternal God, unless we will make two Gods, a great God and a little one. Now, none have ever more firmly believed or more strongly asserted the Godhead of Christ than many of the (so called) Arminians have done, yea, and do at this day. Arminianism, therefore (whatever it be), is totally different from Arianism.

5. The rise of the word was this: JAMES HARMENS—in Latin *Jacobus Arminius*—was first one of the ministers of Amsterdam, and afterward Professor of Divinity at Leyden. He was educated at Geneva; but in the year 1591 began to doubt of the principles which he had till then received. And being more and more convinced that they were wrong, when he was vested with the professorship he publicly taught what he believed the truth, till, in the year 1609, he died in peace. But a few years after his death some zealous men, with the Prince of Orange at their head, furiously assaulted all that held what were called his opinions; and, having procured them to be solemnly condemned in the famous Synod of Dort (not so numerous or learned, but full as impartial as the Council or Synod of Trent), some were put to death, some banished, some imprisoned for life, all turned out of their employments, and made incapable of holding any office, either in Church or State.

6. The errors charged upon these (usually termed *Arminians*) by their opponents are five: (1) That they deny original sin; (2) That they deny justification by faith; (3) That they deny absolute predestination; (4) That they deny the grace of God to be irresistible; and (5) That they affirm a believer may fall from grace.

With regard to the first two of these charges, they plead, Not Guilty. They are entirely false. No man that ever lived, not John Calvin himself, ever asserted either original sin or justification by faith in more strong, more clear and express terms, than Arminius has done. These two points, therefore, are to be set out of the question; in these both parties agree. In this respect there is not a hair's breadth difference between Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield.

7. But there is an undeniable difference between the Calvinists and Arminians with regard to the three other questions. Here they divide; the former believe absolute, the latter only conditional, predestination. The Calvinists hold, (1) God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, to save such and such persons, and no others; and that Christ died for these and none else. The Arminians hold God has decreed from all eternity, touching all that have the written word, "He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not, shall be condemned;" and in order to this, "Christ died for all, all that were dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, for every child of Adam, since "in Adam all died."

8. The Calvinists hold, secondly, that the saving grace of God is absolutely irresistible; that no man is any more able to resist it than to resist the stroke of lightning. The Arminians hold that, although there may be some moments wherein the grace of God acts irresistibly, yet, in general, any man may resist, and that to his eternal ruin, the grace whereby it was the will of God he should have been eternally saved.

9. The Calvinists hold, thirdly, that a true believer in Christ cannot possibly fall from grace. The Arminians hold that a true believer may "make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;" that he may fall, not only foully, but finally, so as to perish forever.

10. Indeed, the two latter points, irresistible grace and infallible perseverance, are the natural consequence of the former, of the unconditional decree. For, if God has eternally and absolutely decreed to save such and such persons, it follows, both that they cannot resist his saving grace (else they might miss of salvation), and that they cannot finally fall from that grace which they can-

not resist. So that in effect the three questions come into one, "Is predestination absolute or conditional?" The Arminians believe it is conditional; the Calvinists, that it is absolute.

11. Away, then, with all ambiguity! Away with all expressions which only puzzle the cause! Let honest men speak out, and not play with hard words which they do not understand. And how can any man know what Arminius held who has never read one page of his writings. Let no man bawl against Arminians till he knows what the term means; and then he will know that Arminians and Calvinists are just upon a level. And Arminians have as much right to be angry at Calvinists as Calvinists have to be angry at Arminians. John Calvin was a pious, learned, sensible man; and so was James Harmens. Many Calvinists are pious, learned, sensible men; and so are many Arminians. Only the former hold absolute predestination; the latter, conditional.

12. One word more: Is it not the duty of every Arminian preacher, first, never, in public or in private, to use the word *Calvinist* as a term of reproach; seeing it is neither better nor worse than calling names?—a practice no more consistent with good sense or good manners than it is with Christianity. Secondly, to do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly of it? And is it not equally the duty of every Calvinist preacher, first, never, in public or in private, in preaching or in conversation, to use the word *Arminian* as a term of reproach? Secondly, to do all that in him lies to prevent his hearers from doing it, by showing them the sin and folly thereof; and that the more earnestly and diligently if they have been accustomed so to do? perhaps encouraged therein by his own example!

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.

God reveals himself under a twofold character; as a Creator, and as a Governor. These are no way inconsistent with each other, but they are totally different.

As a Creator, he has acted in all things according to his own sovereign will. Justice has not, cannot have, any place here; for nothing is due to what has no being. Here, therefore, he may, in

the most absolute sense, do what he will with his own. Accordingly, he created the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein, in every conceivable respect, "according to his own good pleasure." 1. He began his creation at what time, or rather at what part of eternity it seemed him good. Had it pleased him, it might have been millions of years sooner, or millions of ages later. 2. He determined, by his sovereign will, the duration of the universe; whether it should last seven thousand, or seven hundred thousand, or numberless millions of years. 3. By the same, he appointed the place of the universe in the immensity of space. 4. Of his sovereign will he determined the number of the stars, of all the component parts of the universe, and the magnitude of every atom, of every fixed star, every planet, and every comet. 5. As Sovereign, he created the earth, with all the furniture of it, whether animate or inanimate; and gave to each such a nature, with such properties. 6. Of his own good pleasure he made such a creature as man, an embodied spirit, and, in consequence of his spiritual nature, endued with understanding, will, and liberty. 7. He has determined the times for every nation to come into being, with the bounds of their habitation. 8. He has allotted the time, the place, the circumstances, for the birth of each individual:

If of parents I came that honor'd Thy name,
'Twas thy goodness appointed it so.

9. He has given to each a body, as it pleased him, weak or strong, healthy or sickly. This implies, 10. That he gives them various degrees of understanding, and of knowledge, diversified by numberless circumstances. It is hard to say how far this extends; what an amazing difference there is, as to the means of improvement, between one born and brought up in a pious English family and one born and bred among the Hottentots. Only we are sure the difference cannot be so great as to necessitate one to be good, or the other to be evil; to force one into everlasting glory, or the other into everlasting burnings. This cannot be, because it would suppose the character of God as a Creator to interfere with God as a Governor; wherein he does not, cannot possibly, act according to his own mere sovereign will; but, as he has expressly told us, according to the invariable rules both of justice and mercy.

Whether, therefore, we can account for it or no (which indeed we cannot in a thousand cases), we must absolutely maintain

that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. But he cannot reward the sun for shining, because the sun is not a free agent. Neither could he reward us for letting our light shine before men, if we acted as necessarily as the sun. All reward, as well as all punishment, presupposes free agency ; and whatever creature is incapable of choice is incapable of either one or the other.

Whenever, therefore, God acts as a Governor, as a rewarder, or punisher, he no longer acts as a mere Sovereign, by his own sole will and pleasure ; but as an impartial Judge, guided in all things by invariable justice.

Yet it is true that, in some cases, mercy rejoices over justice ; although severity never does. God may reward more, but he will never punish more, than strict justice requires. It may be allowed that God acts as Sovereign in convincing some souls of sin ; arresting them in their mid-career, by his resistless power. It seems also that, at the moment of our conversion, he acts irresistibly. There may likewise be many irresistible touches during the course of our Christian warfare ; with regard to which every believer may say :

“In the time of my distress
Thou hast my succor been,
In my utter helplessness
Restraining me from sin.”

But still, as St. Paul might have been either obedient or “disobedient to the heavenly vision,” so every individual may, after all that God has done, either improve his grace or make it of none effect.

Whatever, therefore, it has pleased God to do of his sovereign pleasure as Creator of heaven and earth, and whatever his mercy may do on particular occasions, over and above what justice requires, the general rule stands firm as the pillars of heaven : “The Judge of all the earth will do right. He will judge the world in righteousness,” and every man therein, according to the strictest justice. He will punish no man for doing any thing which he could not possibly avoid ; neither for omitting any thing which he could not possibly do. Every punishment supposes the offender might have avoided the offense for which he is punished ; otherwise, to punish him would be palpably unjust, and inconsistent with the character of God our Governor.

Let, then, these two ideas of God the Creator, the sovereign

Creator, and God the Governor, the just Governor, be always kept apart. Let us distinguish them from each other with the utmost care. So shall we give God the full glory of his sovereign grace without impeaching his inviolable justice.

CONCERNING "GOSPEL MINISTERS."

1. How frequently do we hear this expression from the mouths of rich and poor, learned and unlearned! Many lament that they have not a gospel minister in their church, and therefore are constrained to seek one at the meeting. Many rejoice that they have a gospel minister, and that there are many such in their neighborhood. Meantime, they generally speak with much displeasure, if not contempt, of those who they say are not gospel ministers.

2. But it is to be feared few of these understand what they say. Few understand what that expression means. Most that use it have only crude, confused notions concerning gospel ministers. And hence many inconveniences arise; yea, much hurt to the souls of men. They contract prejudices in favor of very worthless men, who are indeed blind leaders of the blind, not knowing what the real Gospel is, and therefore incapable of preaching it to others. Meantime, from the same cause, they contract prejudices against other ministers, who in reality both live and preach the Gospel, and therefore are well able to instruct them in all those truths that accompany salvation.

3. But what, then, is the meaning of the expression, Who is a gospel minister? Let us consider this important question calmly in the fear and in the presence of God.

Not every one that preaches the eternal decrees (although many suppose this is the very thing); that talks much of the sovereignty of God, of free, distinguishing grace, of dear electing love, of irresistible grace, and of the infallible perseverance of the saints. A man may speak of all these by the hour together; yea, with all his heart and with all his voice, and yet have no right at all to the title of a gospel minister.

Not every one that talks largely and earnestly on those precious subjects—the righteousness and blood of Christ. Let a man descant on these in ever so lively a manner, let him describe

his sufferings ever so pathetically; if he stops there, if he does not show man's duty as well as Christ's sufferings, if he does not apply all to the consciences of the hearers, he will never lead them to life, either here or hereafter, and therefore is no gospel minister.

Not every one who deals in the promises only, without ever showing the terrors of the law; that slides over "the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness," and endeavors to heal those that never were wounded. These promise-mongers are no gospel ministers.

Not every one (very nearly allied to the former) who bends all his strength to coax sinners to Christ. Such soft, tender expressions as "My dear hearers, my dear lambs," though repeated a thousand times, do not prove a gospel minister.

Lastly, not every one that preaches justification by faith; he that goes no farther than this, that does not insist upon sanctification also, upon all the fruits of faith, upon universal holiness, does not declare the whole counsel of God, and consequently is not a gospel minister.

4. Who, then, is such? Who is a gospel minister in the full scriptural sense of the word? He, and he alone, of whatever denomination, that does declare the whole counsel of God; that does preach the whole Gospel, even justification and sanctification preparatory to glory. He that does not put asunder what God has joined, but publishes alike, "Christ dying for us, and Christ living in us." He that constantly applies all this to the hearts of the hearers, being willing to spend and be spent for them; having himself the mind which was in Christ, and steadily walking as Christ also walked; he, and he alone, can with propriety be termed a gospel minister.

5. Let it be particularly observed, if the Gospel be "glad tidings of great salvation which shall be unto all people," then those only are in the full sense gospel ministers who proclaim the "great salvation"—that is, salvation from all (both inward and outward) sin, into "all the mind that was in Christ Jesus;" and likewise proclaim offers of this salvation to every child of man. This honorable title is, therefore, vilely prostituted when it is given to any but those who testify "that God willeth all men to be saved," and "to be perfect as their Father which is in heaven is perfect."

UPON NECESSITY.

TO THE READER.

I HAD finished what I had designed to say on this subject when the *Essay on Liberty and Necessity* fell into my hands—a most elaborate piece, touched and retouched with all possible care. This has occasioned a considerable enlargement of the following tract. I would fain place mankind in a fairer point of view than that writer has done, as I cannot believe the noblest creature in the visible world to be only a fine piece of clock-work.

Is man a free agent or is he not? Are his actions free or necessary? Is he self-determined in acting, or is he determined by some other being? Is the principle which determines him to act in himself or in another? This is the question which I want to consider. And is it not an important one? Surely there is not one of greater importance in the whole nature of things. For what is there that more nearly concerns all that are born of woman? What can be conceived which more deeply affects, not some only, but every child of man?

I. 1. That man is not self-determined, that the principle of action is lodged not in himself, but in some other being, has been an exceeding ancient opinion; yea, near as old as the foundation of the world. It seems none that admit of revelation can have any doubt of this; for it was unquestionably the sentiment of Adam soon after he had eaten of the forbidden fruit. He imputes what he had done, not to himself, but another, “the woman whom thou gavest me.” It was also the sentiment of Eve, “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” “It is true, I did eat; but the cause of my eating, the spring of my action, was in another.”

2. The same opinion, that man is not self-determined, took root very early and spread wide, particularly in the Eastern world, many ages before Manes was born. Afterward, indeed, he and his followers, commonly called Manichees, formed it into a regular system. They not only maintained that all the actions of man were necessarily determined by a power exterior to himself, but likewise accounted for it by ascribing the good to Oromasdes, the parent of all good; the evil to the other independent being, Arimanius, the parent of all evil.

3. From the Eastern world, “when arts and empire learned to travel west,” this opinion traveled with them into Europe, and soon found its way into Greece. Here it was earnestly espoused and vehemently maintained by the Stoic philosophers, men of great renown among persons of literature, and some of the ablest

disputants in the world. These affirmed with one mouth that, from the beginning of the world, if not rather from all eternity, there was an indissoluble chain of causes and effects, which included all human actions, and that these were by fate so connected together that not one link of the chain could be broken.

4. A fine writer of our own country, who was a few years since gathered to his fathers, has, with admirable skill, drawn the same conclusion from different premises. He lays it down as a principle (and a principle it is which cannot be reasonably denied) that as long as the soul is vitally united to the body, all its operations depend on the body; that in particular all our thoughts depend upon the vibrations of the fibers of the brain; and of consequence vary more or less as those vibrations vary. In that expression, "our thoughts," he comprises all our sensations, all our reflections and passions; yea, and all our volitions, and consequently our actions, which, he supposes, unavoidably follow those vibrations. He premises, "But you will say, This scheme infers the universal necessity of human actions," and frankly adds, "Certainly it does. I am sorry for it; but I cannot help it."

5. And this is the scheme which is now adopted by not a few of the most sensible men in our nation. One of these, fairly confessing that "he did not think himself a sinner," was asked, "Do you never feel any wrong tempers? And do you never speak or act in such a manner as your own reason condemns?" He candidly answered, "Indeed I do. I frequently feel tempers and speak many words and do many actions which I do not approve of. But I cannot avoid it. They result, whether I will or no, from the vibrations of my brain, together with the motion of my blood and the flow of my animal spirits. But these are not in my own power. I cannot help them. They are independent on my choice. And therefore I cannot apprehend myself to be a sinner on this account."

6. Very lately another gentleman, in free conversation, was carrying this matter a little farther. Being asked, "Do you believe God is almighty?" he answered, "I do; or he could not have made the world." "Do you believe he is wise?" "I cannot tell. Much may be said on both sides." "Do you believe he is good?" "No; I cannot believe it. I believe just the contrary. For all the evil in the world is owing to him. I can ascribe it to no other cause. I cannot blame the cur for barking or biting; it is his nature, and he did not make himself. I feel wrong tempers in myself; but that is not my fault, for I cannot

help it. It is my nature, and I could not prevent my having this nature, neither can I change it."

7. The Assembly of Divines, who met at Westminster in the last century, express very nearly the same sentiment, though placed in a different light. They speak to this effect: "Whatever happens in time was unchangeably determined from all eternity. God ordained or ever the world was made all the things that should come to pass therein. The greatest and smallest were equally predetermined. In particular, all the thoughts, all the words, all the actions of every child of man; all that every man thinks or speaks or does from his birth till his spirit returns to God that gave it. It follows that no man can do either more or less good, or more or less evil, than he does. None can think, speak, or act any otherwise than he does, not in any the smallest circumstance. In all he is bound by an invisible, but more than adamantine, chain. No man can move his head or foot, open or shut his eyes, lift his hand or stir a finger any otherwise than as God determined he should from all eternity."

8. That this chain is invisible they allow; man himself perceives nothing of it. He suspects nothing less; he imagines himself to be free in all his actions; he seems to move hither and thither, to go this way or that, to choose doing evil or doing good, just at his own discretion. But all this is an entire mistake; it is no more than a pleasing dream. For all his ways are fixed as the pillars of heaven; all unalterably determined. So that, notwithstanding these gay, flattering appearances,

In spite of all the labor we create,
We only row; but we are steer'd by fate!

9. A late writer, in his celebrated book upon free-will, explains the matter thus: "The soul is now connected with a material vehicle and placed in the material world. Various objects here continually strike upon one or other of the bodily organs. These communicate the impression to the brain, consequent on which such and such sensations follow. These are the materials on which the understanding works in forming all its simple and complex ideas; according to which our judgments are formed. And according to our judgments are our passions, our love and hate, joy and sorrow, desire and fear, with their innumerable combinations. Now, all these passions together are the will variously modified; and all actions flowing from the will are voluntary actions; consequently, they are good or evil, which otherwise

they could not be. And yet it is not in man to direct his own way while he is in the body and in the world."

10. The author of an *Essay on Liberty and Necessity*, published some years since at Edinburgh, speaks still more explicitly, and endeavors to trace the matter to the foundation:

"The impressions," says he, "which man receives in the natural world do not correspond to the truth of things. Thus the qualities called secondary, which we by natural instinct attribute to matter, belong not to matter, nor exist without us; but all the beauty of colors with which heaven and earth appear clothed is a sort of romance or illusion. For in external objects there is really no other distinction but that of the size and arrangement of their constituent parts, whereby the rays of light are variously reflected and refracted.

"In the moral world, whatever is a cause with regard to its proper effect is an effect with regard to some prior cause, and so backward without end. Events, therefore, being a train of causes and effects, are necessary and fixed. Every one must be, and cannot be otherwise than it is.

"And yet a feeling of an opposite kind is deeply rooted in our nature. Many things appear to us as not predetermined by any invariable law. We naturally make a distinction between things that must be and things that may be or may not.

"So with regard to the actions of men. We see that connection between an action and its motive to be so strong that we reason with full confidence concerning the future actions of others. But if actions necessarily arise from their proper motives, then all human actions are necessary and fixed. Yet they do not appear so to us. Indeed, before any particular action we always judge that the action will be the necessary result of some motive. But afterward the feeling instantly varies. We accuse and condemn a man for doing what is wrong. We conceive he had a power of acting otherwise, and the whole train of our feelings supposes him to have been entirely a free agent.

"But what does this liberty amount to? In all cases our choice is determined by some motive. It must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole. But motives are not under our power or direction. When two motives offer we have not the power of choosing as we please. We are necessarily determined.

"Man is passive in receiving impressions of things, according to which the judgment is necessarily formed. This the will necessarily obeys, and the outward action necessarily follows the will.

"Hence it appears that God decrees all future events. He who gave such a nature to his creatures, and placed them in such circumstances that a certain train of actions must necessarily follow; he who did so, and who must have foreseen the consequences, did certainly decree that those events should fall out and that men should act just as they do.

"The Deity is the First Cause of all things. He formed the plan on which all things were to be governed, and put it in execution by establishing both in the natural and moral world certain laws that are fixed and immutable. By virtue of these all things proceed in a regular train of causes and effects, bringing about the events contained in the original plan and admitting the possibility of no other. This universe is a vast machine winded up and set a-going. The several springs

and wheels act unerringly one upon another. The hand advances and the clock strikes precisely as the artist has determined. In this plan man, a rational creature, was to fulfill certain ends. He was to appear as an actor, and to act with consciousness and spontaneity. Consequently, it was necessary he should have some idea of liberty, some feeling of things possible and contingent, things depending on himself, that he might be led to exercise that activity for which he was designed. To have seen himself a part of that great machine would have been altogether incongruous to the ends he was to fulfill. Had he seen that nothing was contingent there would have been no room for forethought, nor for any sort of industry or care. Reason could not have been exercised in the way it is now—that is, man could not have been man. But now, the moment he comes into the world he acts as a free agent. And contingency, though it has no real existence in things, is made to appear as really existing. Thus is our natural feeling directly opposite to truth and matter of fact; seeing it is certainly impossible that any man should act any otherwise than he does.”

See necessity drawn at full length, and painted in the most lively colors !

II. 1. It is easy to observe that every one of these schemes implies the universal necessity of human actions. In this they all agree that man is not a free but a necessary agent, being absolutely determined in all his actions by a principle exterior to himself. But they do not agree what that principle is. The most ancient of them, the Manichæan, maintained that men are determined to evil by the evil god, Arimanius ; that Oromasdes, the good god, would have prevented or removed that evil, but could not ; the power of the evil god being so great that he is not able to control it.

2. The Stoics, on the other hand, did not impute the evil that is in the world to any intelligent principle, but either to the original stubbornness of matter, which even divine power was not capable of removing ; to the concatenation of causes and effects, which no power whatever could alter ; or to unconquerable fate, to which they supposed all the gods, the supreme not excepted, to be subject.

3. The author of two volumes entitled *Man* rationally rejects all the preceding schemes, while he deduces all human actions from those passions and judgments which, during the present union of the soul and body, necessarily result from such and such vibrations of the fibers of the brain. Herein he directly ascribes the necessity of all human actions to God, who, having fixed the laws of this vital union according to his own good pleasure, having so constituted man that the motions of the soul thus depend on the fibers of the body, has thereby laid him under an invincible necessity of acting thus, and in no other manner. So

do those likewise who suppose all the judgments and passions necessarily flow from the motion of the blood and spirits. For this is indirectly to impute all our passions and actions to Him who alone determined the manner wherein our blood and spirits should move.

4. The gentleman next mentioned does this directly, without any softening or circumlocution at all. He flatly and roundly affirms the Creator is the proper author of every thing which man does; that by creating him thus he has absolutely determined the manner wherein he shall act, and that, therefore, man can no more help sinning than a stone can help falling. The Assembly of Divines do as directly ascribe the necessity of human actions to God in affirming that God has eternally determined whatsoever shall be done in time. So likewise does Mr. Edwards, of New England, in proving, by abundance of deep metaphysical reasoning, that “we *must* see, hear, taste, feel the objects that surround us, and *must* have such judgments, passions, actions, and no other.” He flatly ascribes the necessity of all our actions to Him who united our souls to these bodies, placed us in the midst of these objects, and ordered that these sensations, judgments, passions, and actions should spring therefrom.

5. The author last cited connects together and confirms all the preceding schemes, particularly those of the ancient Stoics and the modern Calvinists.

III. 1. It is not easy for a man of common understanding, especially if unassisted by education, to unravel these finely woven schemes, or show distinctly where the fallacy lies. But he knows, he feels, he is certain they cannot be true; that the holy God cannot be the author of sin. The horrid consequences of supposing this may appear to the meanest understanding from a few plain, obvious considerations, of which every man that has common sense may judge.

If all the passions, the tempers, the actions of men are wholly independent on their own choice, are governed by a principle exterior to themselves, then there can be no moral good or evil; there can be neither virtue nor vice, neither good nor bad actions, neither good nor bad passions or tempers. The sun does much good; but it is no virtue; for he is not capable of moral goodness. Why is he not? For this plain reason, because he does not act from choice. The sea does much harm: it swallows up thousands of men; but it is not capable of moral badness, because it does not act by choice, but from a necessity of nature. If,

indeed, one or the other can be said to act at all. Properly speaking, it does not ; it is purely passive ; it is only acted upon by the Creator, and must move in this manner and no other, seeing it cannot resist his will. In like manner St. Paul did much good, but it was no virtue if he did not act from choice. And if he was in all things necessitated to think and act he was not capable of moral goodness. Nero does much evil ; murders thousands of men, and sets fire to the city. But it is no fault ; he is not capable of moral badness if he does not act from choice, but necessity. Nay, properly, the man does not act at all. He is only acted upon by the Creator, and must move thus, being irresistibly impelled ? For who can resist his will ?

2. Again, if all the actions and passions and tempers of men are quite independent on their own choice, are governed by a principle exterior to themselves, then none of them is either rewardable or punishable, is either praise or blame worthy. The consequence is undeniable. I cannot praise the sun for warming, nor blame the stone for wounding me, because neither the sun nor the stone acts from choice, but from necessity. Therefore, neither does the latter deserve blame, nor the former deserve praise. Neither is the one capable of reward, nor the other of punishment. And if a man does good as necessarily as the sun, he is no more praiseworthy than that ; if he does evil as necessarily as the stone, he is no more blameworthy. The dying to save your country is no way rewardable if you are compelled thereto ; and the betraying your country is in no way punishable if you are necessitated to do it.

3. It follows if there be no such thing as virtue or vice, as moral good or evil, if there be nothing rewardable or punishable in the actions or passions of men, then there can be no judgment to come, and no future rewards and punishments. For might not God as well judge the trees of the wood or the stones of the field as man, if man was as totally passive as they ? as irresistibly determined to act thus or thus ? What should he be commended or rewarded for who never did any good but when he could not help it, being impelled thereto by a force which he could not withstand ? What should he be blamed or punished for who never did any evil to which he was not determined by a power he could no more resist than he could shake the pillars of heaven ?

This objection the author of the essay gives in its full strength : "The advocates for liberty reason thus : If actions be necessary, and not in our own power, what ground is there for blame, self-condemnation, or remorse ? If a clock were sensi-

ble of its own motions, and knew that they proceeded according to necessary laws, could it find fault with itself for striking wrong? Would it not blame the artist who had so ill adjusted the wheels? So that, upon this scheme, all the moral constitution of our nature is overturned; there is an end to all the operations of conscience about right and wrong; man is no longer a moral agent, nor the subject of praise or blame for what he does."

He strangely answers: "Certainly the pain, the remorse, which is felt by any man who had been guilty of a bad action springs from the notion that he has a power over his own actions, that he might have forborne to do it. It is on this account that he is angry at himself and confesses himself to be blamable. That uneasiness proceeds on the supposition that he is free and might have acted a better part. And one under the dominion of bad passions is condemned upon this ground, that it was in his power to be free from them. Were not this the case brutes might be the objects of moral blame as well as man. But we do not blame them, because they have not freedom, a power of directing their own actions. We must therefore admit that the idea of freedom is essential to the moral feeling. On the system of universal necessity there could be no place for blame or remorse. And we struggle in vain to reconcile to this system the testimony which conscience clearly gives to freedom."

Is this an answer to the objection? Is it not fairly giving up the whole cause?

He adds: "A feeling of liberty, which I now scruple not to call deceitful, is interwoven with our nature. Man must be so constituted in order to attain virtue." *To attain virtue!* Nay, you have yourself allowed that, on this supposition, virtue and vice can have no being. You go on: "If he saw himself as he really is" (sir, do not you see yourself so?), "if he conceived himself and all his actions necessarily linked into the great chain which renders the whole order both of the natural and moral world unalterably determined in every article, what would follow?" Why, just nothing at all. The great chain must remain as it was before, since whatever you see or conceive, that is "unalterably determined in every article."

To confute himself still more fully, he says: "If we knew good and evil to be necessary and unavoidable" (contradiction in terms; but let it pass), "there would be no more place for praise or blame, no indignation at those who had abused their rational powers, no sense of just punishment annexed to crimes, or of any reward deserved by good actions. All these feelings vanish at once with the feeling of liberty. And the sense of duty must be quite extinguished; for we cannot conceive any moral obligation without supposing a power in the agent over his own actions."

If so, what is he who publishes a book to show mankind that they have no power over their own actions?

To the objection that this scheme "makes God the author of sin," the essayist feebly answers: "Sin, or moral turpitude, lies in the evil intention of him that commits it, or in some wrong affection. Now, there is no wrong intention in God." What then? Whatever wrong intention or affection is in man you make God the direct author of it. For you flatly affirm, "Moral evil cannot exist without being permitted of God. And with regard to a first cause, permitting the same thing as causing." That I totally deny. But if it be, God is the proper cause of all the sin in the universe.

4. Suppose, now, the Judge of all the earth, having just pronounced the awful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," should say to the one on the left hand, "What canst thou offer in thy own behalf?" Might he not, on this scheme, answer, "Lord, why am I doomed to dwell with everlasting burnings? For not doing good? Was it ever in my power to do any good action? Could I ever do any but by that grace which thou hadst determined not to give me? For doing evil? Lord, did I ever do any which I was not bound to do by thy own decree? Was there ever a moment when it was in my power either to do good or to cease from evil? Didst thou not fix whatever I should do or not do or ever I came into the world? And was there ever one hour, from my cradle to my grave, wherein I could act otherwise than I did?" Now, let any man say whose mouth would be stopped, that of the criminal or of the Judge?

5. But if, upon this supposition, there can be no judgment to come and no future rewards or punishments, it likewise follows that the Scriptures which assert both cannot be of divine origin. If there be not "a day wherein God will judge the world by that Man whom he hath appointed," if the wicked shall not go into eternal punishment, neither the righteous into life eternal, what can we think of that book which so frequently and solemnly affirms all these things? We can no longer maintain that "all Scripture was given by the inspiration of God," since it is impossible that the God of truth should be the author of palpable falsehoods. So that whoever asserts the predetermination of all human actions, a doctrine totally inconsistent with the scriptural doctrine of a future punishment, heaven and hell, strikes hereby at the very foundation of Scripture, which must necessarily stand or fall with them.

6. Such absurdities will naturally and necessarily follow from

the scheme of necessity. But Mr. Edwards has found out a most ingenious way of evading this consequence: "I grant," says that good and sensible man, "if the actions of men were involuntary, the consequence would inevitably follow; they could not be either good or evil, nor therefore could they be the proper object either of reward or punishment. But here lies the very ground of your mistake; their actions are not involuntary. The actions of men are quite voluntary; the fruit of their own will. They love, they desire evil things; therefore they commit them. But love and hate, desire and aversion, are only several modes of willing. Now, if men voluntarily commit theft, adultery, or murder, certainly the actions are evil, and therefore punishable. And if they voluntarily serve God and help their neighbors, the actions are good, and therefore rewardable."

7. I cannot possibly allow the consequence upon Mr. Edwards's supposition. Still I say if they are necessitated to commit robbery or murder, they are not punishable for committing it. But you answer, "Nay, their actions are voluntary, the fruit of their own will." If they are, yet that is not enough to make them either good or evil. For their will, on your supposition, is irresistibly impelled, so that they cannot help willing thus or thus. If so, they are no more blamable for that will than for the actions which follow it. There is no blame if they are under a necessity of willing. There can be no moral good or evil unless they have liberty as well as will, which is entirely a different thing. And the not adverting to this seems to be the direct occasion of Mr. Edwards's whole mistake.

8. God created man an intelligent being and endued him with will as well as understanding. Indeed, it seems without this his understanding would have been given to no purpose. Neither would either his will or understanding have answered any valuable purpose if liberty had not been added to them, a power distinct from both; a power of choosing for himself, a self-determining principle. It may be doubted whether God ever made an intelligent creature without all these three faculties, whether any spirit ever existed without them, yea, whether they are not implied in the very nature of a spirit. Certain it is that no being can be accountable for its actions which has not liberty as well as will and understanding.

How admirably is this painted by Milton, supposing God to speak concerning his new-made creature:

"I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the' ethereal powers ;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith and love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
 Not what they would ? What praise could they receive,
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason (reason also is choice),
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had served necessity,
 Not me ? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created—
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all
 Both what they judge and what they choose : For so
 I form'd them free ; and free they must remain,
 Till they enthrall themselves. I else must change
 Their nature, and reverse the high decree,
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom ; they themselves ordain'd their fall."

—*Paradise Lost*, Book iii.

9. It seems they who divide the faculties of the human soul into the understanding, will, and affections, unless they make the will and affections the same thing (and then how inaccurate is the division!), must mean by affections the will, properly speaking, and by the term *will*—neither more nor less than *liberty*—the power of choosing either to do or not to do (commonly called liberty of contradiction), or to do this or the contrary, good or evil, (commonly called liberty of contrariety). Without the former, at least, there can be nothing good or evil, rewardable or punishable. But it is plain the doctrine of necessity, as taught either by ancient heathens or by the moderns (whether Deists or Christians), destroys both, leaves not a shadow of either in any soul of man ; consequently, it destroys all the morality of human actions, making man a mere machine, and leaves no room for any judgment to come, or for either rewards or punishments.

IV. 1. But whatever be the consequences deducible from this, that all human actions are necessary, how will you answer the arguments which are brought in defense of this position ? Let us try whether something of this kind may not be done in a few words.

Indeed, as to the first scheme, that of the Manichees, the main-

tainers of a good and an evil god, though it was formerly espoused by men of renown, St. Augustine in particular, yet it is now so utterly out of date that it would be lost labor to confute it. A little more plausible is this scheme of the Stoics, building necessity upon fate, upon the insuperable stubbornness of matter, or the indissoluble chain of causes and effects. Perhaps they invented this scheme to exculpate God, to avoid laying the blame upon him, by allowing he would have done better if he could, that he was willing to cure the evil, but was not able. But we may answer them short, There is no fate above the Most High; that is an idle, irrational fiction. Neither is there any thing in the nature of matter which is not obedient to his word. The Almighty is able in the twinkling of an eye to reduce any matter into any form he pleases, or to speak it into nothing; in a moment to expunge it out of his creation.

2. The still more plausible scheme of Dr. Hartley (and, I might add, those of the two gentlemen above mentioned, which nearly coincide with it), now adopted by almost all who doubt of the Christian system, requires a more particular consideration, were it only because it has so many admirers. And it certainly contains a great deal of truth, as will appear to any that considers it calmly. For who can deny that not only the memory, but all the operations of the soul, are now dependent on the bodily organs, the brain in particular? insomuch that a blow on the back part of the head (as frequent experience shows) may take away the understanding, and destroy at once both sensation and reflection; and an irregular flow of spirits may quickly turn the deepest philosopher into a madman. We must allow, likewise, that while the very power of thinking depends so much upon the brain, our judgments must needs depend thereon and in the same proportion. It must be farther allowed that, as our sensations, our reflections, and our judgments, so our will and passions also, which naturally follow from our judgments, ultimately depend on the fibers of the brain. But does all this infer the total necessity of all human actions? "I am sorry for it," says the doctor, "but I cannot help it." I verily think I can. I think I can not only cut the knot, by showing (as above) the intolerable absurdities which this scheme implies, but fairly untie it, by pointing out just where the fallacy lies.

3. But first permit me to say a word to the author of the essay. His grand reason for supposing all mankind in a dream is drawn from analogy: "We are in a continual delusion as to the natural

world ; why not as to the moral ? ” Well, how does he prove that we are in a continual delusion as to the natural world ? Thus : “ All the qualities which are termed secondary qualities we, by a natural instinct, ascribe to matter. But it is a mere deceit. They do not belong to matter, neither exist without us.”

As commonly as this is asserted it is absolutely false, as will appear quickly.

You instance in colors, and confidently say, “ All this beauty of colors with which heaven and earth appear to be clouded is a sort of romance or illusion. In external objects there is no other distinction but that of the size and arrangement of their constituent parts whereby the rays of light are variously reflected or refracted.”

But are those rays of light real ? And do they exist without us ? Certainly ; as much as the sun does. And are the constituent parts of these objects real ? Nobody questions it. But are they really of such a size and arranged in such a manner ? They are. And what will you infer from that ? I infer that color is just as real as size or figure, and that all colors do as really exist without us as trees or corn, or heaven or earth.

“ But what do you mean by color ? ” When I say, “ That cloth is of a red color,” I mean its surface is so disposed as to reflect the red (that is, the largest) rays of light. When I say, “ The sky is blue,” I mean it is so disposed as to reflect the blue (that is, the smallest) rays of light. And where is the delusion here ? Does not that disposition, do not those rays, as really exist as either the cloth or the sky ? And are they not as really reflected as the ball in a tennis court ? It is true that when they strike upon my eye a particular sensation follows in my soul. But that sensation is not color ; I know no one that calls it so. Color, therefore, is a real, material thing. There is no illusion in the case, unless you confound the perception with the thing perceived. And all other secondary qualities are just as real as figure or any other primary one. So you have no illusion in the natural world to countenance that you imagine to be in the moral. Wherever, therefore, this argument occurs (and it occurs ten times over), “ The natural world is all illusion ; therefore, so is the moral,” it is just good for nothing.

But take it altogether, and what a supposition is this ! Is it not enough to make one’s blood run cold ? “ The great God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Father of the spirits of all flesh, the God of truth, has encompassed with falsehood every soul that he has made ! has given up all mankind ‘ to a strong delusion,’ to believe a lie ! yea, all his creation is a lie, all the natural and all

the moral world !” If so, you make God himself, rather than the devil (horrid thought !), “the father of lies !” Such you doubtless represent him, when you say, not only that he has surrounded us with illusion on every side, but that the feelings which he has interwoven with our inmost nature are equally illusive !

That all these shadows, which for things we take,
Are but the empty dreams which in death’s sleep we make !

And yet after this you make a feint of disputing in defense of a material world ! Inconsistency all over ! What proof have we of this ; what possible proof can we have if we cannot trust our own eyes or ears, or any or all of our senses ? But it is certain I can trust none of my senses if I am a mere machine. For I have the testimony of all my outward and all my inward senses that I am a free agent. If, therefore, I cannot trust them in this, I can trust them in nothing. Do not tell me there are sun, moon, and stars, or that there are men, beasts, or birds in the world. I cannot believe one tittle of it if I cannot believe what I feel in myself, namely, that it depends on me, and no other being, whether I shall now open or shut my eyes, move my head hither and thither, or stretch my hand or my foot. If I am necessitated to do all this contrary to the whole both of my inward and outward senses, I can believe nothing else, but must necessarily sink into universal skepticism.

Let us now weigh the main argument on which this author builds the melancholy hypothesis of necessity : “Actions necessarily arise from their several motives ; therefore, all human actions are necessary.” Again : “In all cases the choice must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole. But motives are not under our power. Man is passive in receiving impressions of things according to which the last judgment is necessarily formed. This the will necessarily obeys, and the outward action necessarily follows the will.”

Let us take this boasted argument in pieces and survey it part by part. (1) “Motives are not under our power.” This is not universally true ; some are, some are not. That man has a strong motive to run his neighbor through, namely, violent anger, and yet the action does not necessarily follow. Often it does not follow at all ; and where it does, not necessarily, he might have resisted that motive. (2) “In all cases the choice must be determined by that motive which appears the best upon the whole.” This is absolutely false. It is flatly contrary to the experience of

all mankind. Who may not say on many occasions, *Video meliora?* [I see better things]. I know what I do is not “best upon the whole?” (3) “Man is passive in receiving the impressions of things.” Not altogether. Even here much depends on his own choice. In many cases he may or may not receive the impression; in most he may vary it greatly. (4) “According to these his last judgment is necessarily formed.” Nay, this too depends much upon his choice. Sometimes his first, sometimes his last judgment, is according to the impressions which he has received, and frequently it is not. (5) “This the will necessarily obeys.” Indeed it does not. The mind has an intrinsic power of cutting off the connection between the judgment and the will. (6) “And the outward action necessarily follows the will.” Not so. The thing I would, I do not; and the thing I would not, that I do. Whatever, then, becomes of the chain of events; this chain of argument has not one good link belonging to it.

4. But allowing all he contends for, that upon such vibrations of the brain such sensations directly follow, and indirectly, as the various combinations and results of them, all our judgments and passions, and consequently words and actions; yet this infers no necessity at all if there be a God in the world. Upon this the whole matter turns. And,

“This circumstance the doctor had forgot.” And so indeed have almost the whole tribe of modern philosophers. They do not at all take God into their account; they can do their whole business without him. But in truth this their wisdom is their folly; for no system, either of morality or philosophy, can be complete unless God be kept in view from the very beginning to the end. Every true philosopher will surely go at least as far as the poor heathen poet:

Εκ Διὸς ἀρχόμεθα, καὶ ἐν Διὶ λήγετε Μῶσαι.

“Muses begin and end with God supreme.”

Now, if there be a God, he cannot but have all power over every creature that he has made. He must have equal power over matter and spirits, over our souls and bodies. What are then all the vibrations of the brain to him, or all the natural consequences of them? Suppose there be naturally the strongest concatenation of vibrations, sensations, reflections, judgments, passions, actions; cannot he, in a moment, whenever and however he pleases, destroy that concatenation? Cannot he cut off or suspend in any degree the connections between the vibrations and sensations, between

sensations and reflections, between reflections and judgments, and between judgments and passions or actions? We cannot have any idea of God's omnipotence without seeing he can do this if he will.

5. "If he will," you may say, "we know he can. But have we any reason to think he will?" Yes; the strongest reason in the world, supposing that God is love; more especially, suppose he "is loving to every man," and that "his mercy is over all his works." If so, it cannot be that he should see the noblest of his creatures under heaven necessitated to evil and incapable of any relief from himself without affording that relief. It is undeniable that he has fixed in man, in every man, his umpire, conscience; an inward judge, which passes sentence both on his passions and actions, either approving or condemning them. Indeed, it has not power to remove what it condemns; it shows the evil which it cannot cure. But the God of power can cure it, and the God of love will if we choose he should. But he will no more necessitate us to be happy than he will permit any thing beneath the sun to lay us under a necessity of being miserable. I am not careful, therefore, about the flowing of my blood and spirits or the vibrations of my brain, being well assured that, however my spirits may flow or my nerves and fibers vibrate, the Almighty God of love can control them all, and will (unless I obstinately choose vice and misery) afford me such help as, in spite of all these, will put it into my power to be virtuous and happy forever.

GLASGOW, May 14, 1774.

NECESSITY FURTHER CONSIDERED.

I. 1. THE late ingenious Dr. Hartley, in his *Essay on Man*, resolves all thought into vibrations of the brain. When any of the fine fibers of the brain are moved so as to vibrate to and fro, then (according to his scheme) a perception or sensation is the natural consequence. These sensations are at first simple, but are afterward variously compounded, till, by farther vibrations, ideas of reflection are added to ideas of sensation. By the additional vibrations of this curious organ our judgments of things are also formed, and from the same fruitful source arise our reasonings in their endless variety.

2. From our apprehensions of things, from our judgments and reasonings concerning them, all our passions arise, whether those which are more sudden and transient or those of a permanent

nature. And from the several mixtures and modifications of these our tempers or dispositions flow; very nearly, if not altogether, the same with what are usually termed virtues or vices.

3. Our passions and tempers are the immediate source of all our words and actions. Of consequence, these likewise depending on our passions, and our passions on our judgments and apprehensions, all our actions, passions, and judgments are ultimately resolvable into the vibrations of the brain. And all of them together follow each other in one connected chain.

4. "But you will say" (says the doctor), "This infers the universal necessity of human actions. I am sorry for it; but I cannot help it." But since he saw this destroyed that very essence of morality, leaving no room for either virtue or vice, why did he publish it to the world? Why? Because his brain vibrated in such a manner that he could not help it.

Alas for poor human nature! If this is so, where is "the dignity of man?"

II. 1. But other great men totally disapprove of the doctrine of vibration. They give an entirely different account of this whole affair. They say the delicate, soft, and almost fluid substance of which the brain is composed is absolutely incapable of such vibrations as the doctor ascribes to it; but that the animal spirits, whatever they are, continually moving through that soft substance, naturally form various traces therein; first, very simple, then less or more compounded; that these are afterward varied innumerable ways; and that from these simple or compounded traces arise simple or compounded ideas, whether of sensation or reflection. From these result the judgments we form, with all our train of reasonings; and, at a little farther remove, our passions, our tempers, and from these our words and actions.

2. It is easy to observe that this scheme equally infers the universal necessity of human actions. The premises indeed are a little different, but the conclusion is one and the same. If every thought, word, and action necessarily depends upon those traces in the brain which are formed whether we will or no, without either our consent or knowledge, then the man has no more liberty in thinking, speaking, or acting than the stone has in falling.

III. That great man, President Edwards, of New England, places this in a still stronger light. He says:

1. The whole frame of this world wherein we are placed is so constituted that, without our choice, visible objects affect our

eyes, sounds strike upon the ear, and the other things which surround us affect the other bodily organs, according to their several natures.

2. The nerves, which are spread all over the body, without any choice of ours, convey the impression made on the outward organ to the common sensory; supposed to be lodged either in the pineal gland, or in some other part of the brain.

3. Immediately, without our choice, the perception or sensation follows; and from this,

4. The simple apprehension (analogous to sensation), which furnishes us with simple ideas.

5. These ideas are more and more associated together, still without our choice; and we understand, judge, reason accordingly, yea, love, hate, joy, grieve, hope, or fear.

6. And according to our passions we speak and act. Where is liberty then? It is excluded. All you see is one connected chain, fixed as the pillars of heaven.

IV. To the same effect, though with a little variation, speaks the ingenious Lord Kames. He says:

The universe is one immense machine, one amazing piece of clock-work, consisting of innumerable wheels fitly framed, and indissolubly linked together. Man is one of these wheels, fixed in the middle of this vast automaton. And he moves just as necessarily as the rest, as the sun or moon or earth; only with this difference (which was necessary for completing the design of the great Artificer), that he seems to himself perfectly free; he imagines that he is unnecessitated, and master of his own motion; whereas in truth he no more directs or moves himself than any other wheel in the machine.

The general inference, then, is still the same; the point which all these so laboriously endeavor to prove is that inevitable necessity governs all things, and men have no more liberty than stones.

V. 1. But allowing all this; allowing (in a sense) all that Drs. Hartley, Edwards, and their associates contend for; what discovery have they made? What new thing have they found out? What does all this amount to? With infinite pains, with immense parade, with the utmost ostentation of mathematical and metaphysical learning, they have discovered just as much as they might have found in one single line of the Bible.

“Without me ye can do nothing!” absolutely, positively nothing! seeing in him all things live and move, as well as have their being; seeing he is not only the true *primum mobile* [first

mover], containing the whole frame of creation, but likewise the inward, sustaining, acting principle, indeed the only proper agent in the universe; unless so far as he imparts a spark of his active, self-moving nature to created spirits. But more especially “ye can do nothing” right, nothing wise, nothing good, without the direct, immediate agency of the First Cause.

2. Let the trial be made. And, first, what can reason, all-sufficient reason, do in this matter? Let us try upon Dr. Hartley’s scheme. Can it prevent or alter the vibrations of the brain? Can it prevent or alter the various compositions of them? or cut off the connection between these and our apprehensions, judgments, reasonings? or between these and our passions? or that between our passions and our words and actions? Not at all. Reason can do nothing in this matter. In spite of all our reason nature will keep its course, will hold on its way, and utterly bear down its feeble opponent.

3. And what can reason do upon the second supposition? Can it prevent or alter the traces in the brain? Not a jot more than it could the vibrations. They laugh at all its power. Can it cut off the connection between those traces and our apprehensions? or that between our apprehensions and our passions? or between our passions and actions? Nothing at all of this. It may see the evil, but it cannot help it.

4. Try what reason can do upon the third supposition, that of President Edwards. Can it change the appearances of the things that surround us? or the impression which the nerves convey to the common sensory? or the sensation that follows? or the apprehension? Or can it cut off the connection between our apprehensions of things and our passions? or that between our passions and our actions? Poor, impotent reason! It can do neither more nor less in any of these matters. It cannot alter the outward constitution of things; the nature of light, sound, or the other objects that surround us. It cannot prevent their affecting our senses thus and thus. And then will not all the rest follow?

5. Make a trial, if reason can do any more, upon Lord Kames’s supposition. Can it in any degree alter the nature of the universal machine? Can it change or stop the motion of any one wheel? Utterly impossible.

6. Has free-will any more power in these respects than reason? Let the trial be made upon each of these schemes.

What can it do upon Dr. Hartley’s scheme? Can our free-will alter one vibration of the brain? What can it do upon the second

scheme? Can it erase or alter one of the traces formed there? What can it do upon Mr. Edwards's? Can it alter the appearances of the things that surround us? or the impressions they make upon the nerves? or the natural consequences of them? Can it do any thing more on Lord Kames's scheme? Can it any ways alter the constitution of the great clock? Stand still! Look awhile into your own breast! What can your will do in any of these matters? Ah, poor free-will! Does not plain experience show it is as impotent as your reason? Let it stand, then, as an eternal truth, "Without me ye can do nothing."

VI. 1. But in the same old book there is another word: "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." Here the charm is dissolved! The light breaks in, and the shadows flee away.

One of these sentences should never be viewed apart from the other: Each receives light from the other. God hath joined them together, and let no man put them asunder.

Now, taking this into the account, I care not one pin for all Dr. Hartley can say of his vibrations. Allowing the whole which he contends for, allowing all the links of his mathematical chain to be as indissolubly joined together as are the propositions in Euclid; suppose vibrations, perceptions, judgments, passions, tempers, actions, ever so naturally to follow each other, what is all this to the God of nature? Cannot he stop, alter, annihilate any or all of these, in whatever manner and in whatever moment he pleases? Away, then, with all these fine-wrought speculations! Sweep them off as a spider's web! Scatter them in the wind! How helpless soever they may be "who are without God in the world," however they may groan under the iron hand of dire necessity, necessity has no power over those "who have the Lord for their God." Each of these can say, through happy experience, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

2. Again: Allowing all the minute philosophers can say of the traces formed in the brain, and of perceptions, judgments, passions, tempers, words, and actions naturally flowing therefrom: whatever dreadful consequences may follow from hence, with regard to those who know not God, who have only natural reason and free-will to oppose the power of nature (which we know to have no more force than a thread of tow that has touched the fire), under the influence of the God of nature we laugh all our enemies to scorn. He can alter or efface all these traces in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Still, although "without him I can do nothing," "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

3. Yet again : Let Mr. Edwards say all he will or can concerning the outward appearances of things, as giving rise to sensations, association of ideas, passions, dispositions, and actions ; allowing this to be the course of nature ! What then ? See One superior to nature ! What is the course of nature to him ? By a word, a nod, he turneth it upside down !

His power inverted Nature owns,
Her only law his sovereign word.

Let your chain be wrought ever so firm ; he nods, and it flies in pieces ; he touches it, and all the links fall asunder as unconnected as the sand.

4. Once more : After Lord Kames has said all he pleases concerning the grand machine of the universe, and concerning the connection of its several wheels, yet it must be allowed he that made it can unmake it ; can vary every wheel, every spring, every movement at his own good pleasure. Neither, therefore, does this imply any necessity laid either upon the thoughts, passions, or actions of those that know and trust in Him who is the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth.

5. Ah, poor infidel ! this is no comfort to you ! You must plunge on in the fatal whirlpool ! You are without hope ! without help ! For there is only one possible help ; and that you spurn. What follows then ? Why

*Si figit adamantinos
Summis verticibus dira Necessitas
Clavos, non animum metu,
Non mortis laqueis expedit caput.*

[If direful Necessity fix her adamantine spikes in your pate, you cannot deliver your soul from fear, nor your life from the snares of death.]

O, what advantage has a Christian (a real Christian) over an infidel ! He sees God ! Consequently

*Metus omnes, et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.*

“He tramples on inexorable fate,
And fear, and death, and hell !”

6. Ah, poor predestinarian ! If you are true to your doctrine, this is no comfort to you ! For perhaps you are not of the elect number ; if so, you are in the whirlpool too. For what is your hope ? Where is your help ? There is no help for you in your God. *Your* God ! No, he is not yours ; he never was ; he never

will be. He that made you, he that called you into being, has no pity upon you! He made you for this very end, to damn you; to cast you headlong into a lake of fire burning with brimstone! This was prepared for you or ever the world began! And for this you are now reserved in chains of darkness till the decree brings forth; till, according to his eternal, unchangeable, irresistible will,

You groan, you howl, you writhe in waves of fire,
And pour forth blasphemies at his desire.

O God, how long shall this doctrine stand?

AN ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY.

BRETHREN AND FATHERS: Let it not be imputed to forwardness, vanity, or presumption that one who is of little esteem in the Church takes upon him thus to address a body of people, to many of whom he owes the highest reverence. I owe a still higher regard to Him who I believe requires this at my hands, to the great Bishop of our souls, before whom both you and I must shortly give an account of our stewardship. It is a debt I owe to love, to real, disinterested affection, to declare what has long been the burden of my soul. And may the God of love enable you to read these lines in the same spirit wherewith they were wrote! It will easily appear to an unprejudiced reader that I do not speak from a spirit of anger or resentment. I know well, "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Much less would I utter one word out of contempt, a spirit justly abhorred by God and man. Neither of these can consist with that earnest, tender love, which is the motive of my present undertaking. In this spirit I desire to cast my bread upon the waters; it is enough if I find it again after many days.

Meantime, you are sensible love does not forbid, but rather require, plainness of speech. Has it not often constrained you, as well as me, to lay aside, not only disguise, but reserve also; and "by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God?" And while I endeavor to do this, let me earnestly entreat you, for the love of God, for the love of your own soul, for the love of the souls committed to your charge, yea, and of the whole Church of Christ, do not bias your mind by thinking *who* it is that speaks, but impartially con-

sider *what* is spoken. And if it be false or foolish reject it; but do not reject "the words of truth and soberness."

My first design was to offer a few plain thoughts to the clergy of our own Church only. But upon farther reflection I see no cause for being so "straitened in my own bowels." I am a debtor to all; and therefore, though I primarily speak to them with whom I am more immediately connected, yet I would not be understood to exclude any, of whatsoever denomination, whom God has called to "watch over the souls of others, as they that must give account."

In order to our giving this account with joy, are there not two things which it highly imports us to consider: first, What manner of men ought we to be? secondly, Are we such, or are we not?

I. And, first, if we are "overseers over the Church of God, which he hath bought with his own blood," what manner of men ought we to be in gifts as well as in grace?

1. To begin with gifts; and (1) with those that are from nature. Ought not a minister to have, first, a good understanding, a clear apprehension, a sound judgment, and a capacity of reasoning with some closeness? Is not this necessary in a high degree for the work of the ministry? Otherwise, how will he be able to understand the various states of those under his care, or to steer them through a thousand difficulties and dangers to the haven where they would be? Is it not necessary with respect to the numerous enemies whom he has to encounter? Can a fool cope with all the men that know not God, and with all the spirits of darkness? Nay, he will neither be aware of the devices of Satan nor the craftiness of his children.

Secondly. Is it not highly expedient that a guide of souls should have likewise some liveliness and readiness of thought? Or how will he be able, when need requires, to "answer a fool according to his folly?" How frequent is this need! seeing we almost every-where meet with those empty, yet petulant creatures, who are far "wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason." Reasoning, therefore, is not the weapon to be used with them. You cannot deal with them thus. They scorn being convinced; nor can they be silenced but in their own way.

Thirdly. To a sound understanding and a lively turn of thought should be joined a good memory; if it may be, ready, that you may make whatever occurs in reading or conversation your own; but, however, retentive, lest we be "ever learning, and

never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." On the contrary, "every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," every teacher fitted for his work "is like a householder who bringeth out of his treasures things new and old."

2. And as to acquired endowments, can he take one step aright without first a competent share of knowledge? a knowledge, first, of his own office, of the high trust in which he stands, the important work to which he is called? Is there any hope that a man should discharge his office well if he knows not what it is? that he should acquit himself faithfully of a trust, the very nature whereof he does not understand? Nay, if he knows not the work God has given him to do, he cannot finish it.

Secondly. No less necessary is a knowledge of the Scriptures, which teach us how to teach others; yea, a knowledge of all the Scriptures; seeing Scripture interprets Scripture; one part fixing the sense of another. So that, whether it be true or not that every good textuary is a good divine, it is certain none can be a good divine who is not a good textuary. None else can be mighty in the Scriptures; able both to instruct and to stop the mouths of gainsayers.

In order to do this accurately, ought he not to know the literal meaning of every word, verse, and chapter; without which there can be no firm foundation on which the spiritual meaning can be built? Should he not likewise be able to deduce the proper corollaries, speculative and practical, from each text; to solve the difficulties which arise, and answer the objections which are or may be raised against it; and to make a suitable application of all to the consciences of his hearers?

Thirdly. But can he do this in the most effectual manner without a knowledge of the original tongues? Without this, will he not frequently be at a stand, even as to texts which regard practice only? But he will be under still greater difficulties with respect to controverted Scriptures. He will be ill able to rescue these out of the hands of any man of learning that would pervert them; for whenever an appeal is made to the original his mouth is stopped at once.

Fourthly. Is not a knowledge of profane history, likewise, of ancient customs, of chronology and geography, though not absolutely necessary, yet highly expedient for him that would thoroughly understand the Scriptures; since the want even of this knowledge is but poorly supplied by reading the comments of other men?

Fifthly. Some knowledge of the sciences also is, to say the least, equally expedient. Nay, may we not say that the knowledge of one (whether art or science), although now quite unfashionable, is even necessary next, and in order to, the knowledge of the Scripture itself? I mean logic. For what is this, if rightly understood, but the art of good sense? of apprehending things clearly, judging truly, and reasoning conclusively? What is it, viewed in another light, but the art of learning and teaching, whether by convincing or persuading? What is there, then, in the whole compass of science to be desired in comparison of it?

Is not some acquaintance with what has been termed the second part of logic (metaphysics), if not so necessary as this, yet highly expedient, (1) In order to clear our apprehension (without which it is impossible either to judge correctly or to reason closely or conclusively), by ranging our ideas under general heads? And, (2) In order to understand many useful writers, who can very hardly be understood without it?

Should not a minister be acquainted, too, with at least the general grounds of natural philosophy? Is not this a great help to the accurate understanding several passages of Scripture? Assisted by this, he may himself comprehend, and on proper occasions explain to others, how the invisible things of God are seen from the creation of the world; how "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," till they cry out, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all."

But how far can he go in this without some knowledge of geometry? which is likewise useful, not barely on this account, but to give clearness of apprehension, and a habit of thinking closely and connectedly.

It must be allowed, indeed, that some of these branches of knowledge are not so indispensably necessary as the rest; and therefore no thinking man will condemn the fathers of the Church for having, in all ages and nations, appointed some to the ministry who, suppose they had the capacity, yet had not had the opportunity of attaining them. But what excuse is this for one who has the opportunity and makes no use of it? What can be urged for a person who has had a university education if he does not understand them all? Certainly, supposing him to have any capacity, to have common understanding, he is inexcusable before God and man.

Sixthly. Can any who spend several years in those seats of learning be excused if they do not add to that of the languages and sciences the knowledge of the fathers? the most authentic commentators on Scripture, as being both nearest the fountain and eminently endued with that Spirit by whom all Scripture was given. It will be easily perceived I speak chiefly of those who wrote before the Council of Nice. But who would not likewise desire to have some acquaintance with those that followed them; with St. Chrysostom, Basil, Jerome, Austin, and, above all, the man of a broken heart, Ephraim Cyrus?

Seventhly. There is yet another branch of knowledge highly necessary for a clergyman, and that is, knowledge of the world; a knowledge of men, of their maxims, their tempers, and manners, such as they occur in real life. Without this he will be liable to receive much hurt, and capable of doing little good; as he will not know either how to deal with men according to the vast variety of their characters or to preserve himself from those who almost in every place lie in wait to deceive.

How nearly allied to this is the discernment of spirits! so far as it may be acquired by diligent observation. And can a guide of souls be without it? If he is, is he not liable to stumble at every step?

Eighthly. Can he be without an eminent share of prudence; that most uncommon thing which is usually called common sense? But how shall we define it? Shall we say, with the schools, that it is *recta ratio rerum agibilium particularium*? [A right regard of particular things which may be done?] Or is it an habitual consideration of all the circumstances of a thing—*Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando?* [Who, what, where, with what helps, why, how, when?]
—and a facility of adapting our behavior to the various combinations of them? However it be defined, should it not be studied with all care, and pursued with all earnestness of application? For what terrible inconveniences ensue whenever it is remarkably wanting.

Ninthly. Next to prudence or common sense (if it be not included therein) a clergyman ought certainly to have some degree of good breeding; I mean address, easiness, and propriety of behavior, wherever his lot is cast; perhaps, one might add, he should have (though not the stateliness, for he is “the servant of all,” yet) all the courtesy of a gentleman, joined with the correctness of a scholar. Do we want a pattern of this? We have one in St. Paul, even before Felix, Festus, King Agrippa.

One can scarce help thinking he was one of the best bred men, one of the finest gentlemen in the world. O, that we likewise had the skill to "please all men for their good unto edification!"

In order to this, especially in our public ministrations, would not one wish for a strong, clear, musical voice, and a good delivery, both with regard to pronunciation and action? I name these here because they are far more acquirable than has been commonly imagined. A remarkably weak and untunable voice has by steady application become strong and agreeable. Those who stammered almost at every word have learned to speak clearly and plainly. And many who were eminently ungraceful in their pronunciation and awkward in their gesture have, in some time, by art and labor, not only corrected that awkwardness of action and ungracefulness of utterance, but have become excellent in both, and in these respects likewise the ornaments of their profession.

What may greatly encourage those who give themselves up to the work, with regard to all these endowments, many of which cannot be attained without considerable labor, is this: they are assured of being assisted in all their labor by Him who teacheth man knowledge. And who teacheth like him? Who, like him, giveth wisdom to the simple? How easy is it for him (if we desire it, and believe that he is both able and willing to do this), by the powerful though secret influences of his Spirit, to open and enlarge our understanding; to strengthen all our faculties; to bring to our remembrance whatsoever things are needful, and to fix and sharpen our attention to them, so that we may profit above all who depend wholly on themselves, in whatever may qualify us for our Master's work?

3. But all these things, however great they may be in themselves, are little in comparison of those that follow. For what are all other gifts, whether natural or acquired, when compared to the grace of God? And how ought this to animate and govern the whole intention, affection, and practice of a minister of Christ?

(1) As to his intention. Both in undertaking this important office and in executing every part of it, ought it not to be singly this, to glorify God, and to save souls from death? Is not this absolutely and indispensably necessary, before all and above all things? "If his eye be single, his whole body," his whole soul, his whole work "will be full of light." "God who commanded light to shine out of darkness," will shine on his heart; will

direct him in all his ways, will give him to see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. But if his eye, his intention, be not single, if there be any mixture of meaner motives (how much more if those were or are his leading motives in undertaking or exercising this high office !), his "whole body," his whole soul, "will be full of darkness," even such as issues from the bottomless pit : let not such a man think that he shall have any blessing from the Lord. No ; the curse of God abideth on him. Let him not expect to enjoy any settled peace, any solid comfort, in his own breast ; neither can he hope there will be any fruit of his labors, any sinners converted to God.

(2) As to his affections. Ought not a "steward of the mysteries of God," a shepherd of the souls for whom Christ died, to be endued with an eminent measure of love to God, and love to all his brethren ? a love the same in kind, but in degree far beyond that of ordinary Christians ? Can he otherwise answer the high character he bears, and the relation wherein he stands ? Without this, how can he go through all the toils and difficulties which necessarily attend the faithful execution of his office ? Would it be possible for a parent to go through the pain and fatigue of bearing and bringing up even one child were it not for that vehement affection, that inexpressible *σὸς*, which the Creator has given for that very end ? How much less will it be possible for any pastor, any spiritual parent, to go through the pain and labor of "travailing in birth for," and bringing up, many children to the measure of the full stature of Christ without a large measure of that inexpressible affection which "a stranger intermeddleth not with !"

He therefore must be utterly void of understanding, must be a madman of the highest order, who, on any consideration whatever, undertakes this office while he is a stranger to this affection. Nay, I have often wondered that any man in his senses does not rather dig or thresh for a livelihood than continue therein, unless he feels at least (which is *extremâ lineâ amare*) [to love in the highest degree] such an earnest concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of souls, that he is ready to do any thing, to lose any thing, or to suffer any thing rather than one should perish for whom Christ died.

And is not even this degree of love to God and man utterly inconsistent with the love of the world ; with the love of money or praise ; with the very lowest degree of either ambition or sensuality ? How much less can it consist with that poor, low, irra-

tional, childish principle, the love of diversions? (Surely, even a man, were he neither a minister nor a Christian, should "put away childish things.") Not only this, but the love of pleasure and, what lies still deeper in the soul, the love of ease flees before it.

(3) As to his practice. "Unto the ungodly, saith God, Why dost thou preach my laws?" What is a minister of Christ, a shepherd of souls, unless he is all devoted to God? unless he abstain, with the utmost care and diligence, from every evil word and work; from all appearance of evil; yea, from the most innocent things whereby any might be offended or made weak? Is he not called, above others, to be an example to the flock in his private as well as public character? an example of all holy and heavenly tempers filling the heart so as to shine through the life? Consequently, is not his whole life, if he walks worthy of his calling, one incessant labor of love; one continued tract of praising God and helping man; one series of thankfulness and beneficence? Is he not always humble, always serious, though rejoicing evermore; mild, gentle, patient, abstinent? May you not resemble him to a guardian angel, ministering to those "who shall be heirs of salvation?" Is he not one sent forth from God to stand between God and man, to guard and assist the poor, helpless children of men, to supply them both with light and strength, to guide them through a thousand known and unknown dangers, till at the appointed time he returns, with those committed to his charge, to his and their Father who is in heaven?

O, who is able to describe such a messenger of God faithfully executing his high office! working together with God, with the great Author both of the old and of the new creation! See his Lord, the eternal Son of God, going forth on that work of omnipotence, and creating heaven and earth by the breath of his mouth! See the servant whom he delighteth to honor fulfilling the counsel of his will, and in his name speaking the word whereby is raised a new spiritual creation. Empowered by him, he says to the dark, unformed void of nature, "Let there be light: and there is light. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." He is continually employed in what the angels of God have not the honor to do—co-operating with the Redeemer of men in "bringing many children to glory."

Such is a true minister of Christ; and such, beyond all possibility of dispute, ought both you and I to be.

II. But are we such? What are we in the respects above

named? It is a melancholy but necessary consideration. It is true, many have wrote upon the subject, and some of them admirably well; yet few, if any, at least in our nation, have carried their inquiry through all these particulars. Neither have they always spoken so plain and home as the nature of the thing required. But why did they not? Was it because they were unwilling to give pain to those whom they loved? Or were they hindered by fear of disobliging, or of incurring any temporal inconvenience? Miserable fear! Is any temporal inconvenience whatever to be laid in the balance with the souls of our brethren? Or were they prevented by shame, arising from a consciousness of their own many and great defects? Undoubtedly this might extenuate the fault, but not altogether remove it. For is it not a wise advice, "Be not ashamed when it concerneth thy soul?" especially when it concerns the souls of thousands also? In such a case may God

Set as a flint our steady face,
Harden to adamant our brow!

But is there not another hinderance? Should not compassion, should not tenderness, hinder us from giving pain? Yes; from giving unnecessary pain. But what manner of tenderness is this? It is like that of a surgeon who lets his patient be lost because he is too compassionate to probe his wounds. Cruel compassion! Let me give pain, so I may save life. Let me probe, that God may heal.

1. Are we then such as we are sensible we should be, first, with regard to natural endowments? I am afraid not. If we were, how many stumbling-blocks would be removed out of the way of serious infidels? Alas! what terrible effects do we continually see of that common though senseless imagination, "The boy, if he is fit for nothing else, will do well enough for a parson!" Hence it is that we see (I would to God there were no such instance in all Great Britain or Ireland!) dull, heavy, blockish ministers; men of no life, no spirit, no readiness of thought; who are consequently the jest of every pert fool, every lively, airy coxcomb they meet. We see others whose memory can retain nothing; therefore, they can never be men of considerable knowledge; they can never know much even of those things which they are most nearly concerned to know. Alas! they are pouring the water into a leaky vessel; and the broken cistern can hold no water! I do not say, with Plato, that "all human knowledge is nothing but remembering." Yet certain it is that

without remembering we can have but a small share of knowledge. And even those who enjoy the most retentive memory find great reason still to complain,

Skill comes so slow, and life so fast does fly ;
We learn so little, and forget so much.

And yet we see and bewail a still greater defect in some that are in the ministry. They want sense, they are defective in understanding, their capacity is low and shallow, their apprehension is muddy and confused ; of consequence, they are utterly incapable either of forming a true judgment of things or of reasoning justly upon any thing. O, how can these who themselves know nothing aright impart knowledge to others ? how instruct them in all the variety of duty to God, their neighbor, and themselves ? How will they guide them through all the mazes of error, through all the entanglements of sin and temptation ? How will they apprise them of the devices of Satan, and guard them against all the wisdom of the world ?

It is easy to perceive I do not speak this for their sake (for they are incorrigible), but for the sake of parents, that they may open their eyes and see a blockhead can never “do well enough for a parson.” He may do well enough for a tradesman ; so well as to gain fifty or a hundred thousand pounds. He may do well enough for a soldier ; nay (if you pay well for ‘it), for a very well-dressed and well-mounted officer. He may do well enough for a sailor, and may shine on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war. He may do so well in the capacity of a lawyer or physician as to ride in his gilt chariot. But, O ! think not of his being a minister unless you would bring a blot upon your family, a scandal upon our Church, and a reproach on the Gospel, which he may murder, but cannot teach.

Are we such as we are sensible we should be, secondly, with regard to acquired endowments ? Here the matter (suppose we have common understanding) lies more directly within our own power. But under this, as well as the following heads, methinks, I would not consider at all how many or how few are either excellent or defective. I would only desire every person who reads this to apply it to himself. Certainly, some one in the nation is defective. Am not I the man ?

Let us each seriously examine himself. Have I, (1) Such a knowledge of Scripture as becomes him who undertakes so to explain it to others that it may be a light in all their paths ? Have I a full and clear view of the analogy of faith, which is a

clew to guide me through the whole? Am I acquainted with the several parts of Scripture; with all parts of the Old Testament and the New? Upon the mention of any text, do I know the context and the parallel places? Have I that point at least of a good divine, the being a good textuary? Do I know the grammatical construction of the four gospels; of the Acts; of the epistles; and am I a master of the spiritual sense (as well as the literal) of what I read? Do I understand the scope of each book, and how every part of it tends thereto? Have I skill to draw the natural inferences deducible from each text? Do I know the objections raised to them or from them by Jews, Deists, Papists, Arians, Socinians, and all other sectaries who more or less corrupt or cauponize the word of God? Am I ready to give a satisfactory answer to each of these objections? And have I learned to apply every part of the sacred writings, as the various states of my hearers require?

(2) Do I understand Greek and Hebrew? Otherwise, how can I undertake (as every minister does), not only to explain books which are written therein, but to defend them against all opponents? Am I not at the mercy of every one who does understand, or even pretends to understand, the original? For which way can I confute his pretense? Do I understand the language of the Old Testament? critically? at all? Can I read into English one of David's psalms; or even the first chapter of Genesis? Do I understand the language of the New Testament? Am I a critical master of it? Have I enough of it even to read into English the first chapter of St. Luke? If not, how many years did I spend at school? How many at the university? And what was I doing all those years? Ought not shame to cover my face?

(3) Do I understand my own office? Have I deeply considered before God the character which I bear? What is it to be an ambassador of Christ, an envoy from the King of Heaven? And do I know and feel what is implied in "watching over the souls" of men "as he that must give account?"

(4) Do I understand so much of profane history as tends to confirm and illustrate the sacred? Am I acquainted with the ancient customs of the Jews and other nations mentioned in Scripture? Have I a competent knowledge of chronology, that, at least, which refers to the sacred writings, and am I so far (if no farther) skilled in geography as to know the situation and give some account of all the considerable places mentioned therein?

(5) Am I a tolerable master of the sciences? Have I gone

through the very gate of them, logic? If not, I am not likely to go much farther, when I stumble at the threshold. Do I understand it so as to be ever the better for it? to have it always ready for use; so as to apply every rule of it, when occasion is, almost as naturally as I turn my hand? Do I understand it at all? Are not even the moods and figures above my comprehension? Do not I poorly endeavor to cover my ignorance by effecting to laugh at their barbarous names? Can I even reduce an indirect mood to a direct; an hypothetic to an categorical syllogism? Rather, have not my stupid indolence and laziness made me very ready to believe what the little wits and pretty gentlemen affirm, "that logic is good for nothing?" It is good for this at least (wherever it is understood), to make people talk less; by showing them both what is and what is not to the point, and how extremely hard it is to prove any thing. Do I understand metaphysics; if not the depths of the Schoolmen, the subtleties of Scotus or Aquinas, yet the first rudiments, the general principles, of that useful science? Have I conquered so much of it as to clear my apprehension and range my ideas under proper heads; so much as enables me to read with ease and pleasure, as well as profit, Dr. Henry Moore's Works, Malebranche's *Search After Truth*, and Dr. Clarke's *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*? Do I understand natural philosophy? If I have not gone deep therein, have I digested the general grounds of it? Have I mastered Gravesande, Keill, Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, with his "Theory of Light and Colors?" In order thereto, have I laid in some stock of mathematical knowledge? Am I master of the mathematical A B C of Euclid's *Elements*? If I have not gone thus far, if I am such a novice still, what have I been about ever since I came from school?

(6) Am I acquainted with the fathers; at least with those venerable men who lived in the earliest ages of the Church? Have I read over the golden remains of Clemens Romanus, of Ignatius and Polycarp; and have I given one reading at least to the works of Justin Martyr, Tertullian Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Cyprian?

(7) Have I any knowledge of the world? Have I studied men (as well as books), and observed their tempers, maxims, and manners? Have I learned to beware of men; to add the wisdom of the serpent to the innocence of the dove? Has God given me by nature or have I acquired any measure of the discernment of spirits, or of its near ally, prudence, enabling me on all occasions

to consider all circumstances, and to suit and vary my behavior according to the various combinations of them? Do I labor never to be rude or ill mannered; not to be remarkably wanting in good breeding? Do I endeavor to copy after those who are eminent for address and easiness of behavior? Am I (though never light or trifling, either in word or action, yet) affable and courteous to all men? And do I omit no means which are in my power, and consistent with my character, of "pleasing all men" with whom I converse, "for their good to edification?"

If I am wanting even in these lowest endowments, shall I not frequently regret the want? How often shall I move heavily and be far less useful than I might have been! How much more shall I suffer in my usefulness, if I have wasted the opportunities I once had of acquainting myself with the great lights of antiquity, the antenicene fathers; or if I have droned away those precious hours wherein I might have made myself master of the sciences! How poorly must I many times drag on, for want of the helps which I have vilely cast away? But is not my case still worse if I have loitered away the time wherein I should have perfected myself in Greek and Hebrew? I might before this have been critically acquainted with these treasuries of sacred knowledge. But they are now hid from my eyes; they are close locked up, and I have no key to open them. However, have I used all possible diligence to supply that grievous defect (so far as it can be supplied now) by the most accurate knowledge of the English Scriptures? Do I meditate therein day and night? Do I think (and consequently speak) thereof, "when I sit in the house, and when I walk by the way; when I lie down, and when I rise up?" By this means have I at length attained a thorough knowledge, as of the sacred text, so of its literal and spiritual meaning? Otherwise, how can I attempt to instruct others therein? Without this I am a blind guide indeed! I am absolutely incapable of teaching my flock what I have never learned myself; no more fit to lead souls to God than I am to govern the world.

2. And yet there is a higher consideration than that of gifts; higher than any or all of these joined together; a consideration in view of which all external and all intellectual endowments vanish into nothing. Am I such as I ought to be, with regard to the grace of God? The Lord God enable me to judge aright of this!

And, (1) What was my intention in taking upon me this office and ministry? What was it, in taking charge of this parish, either

as minister or curate? Was it always as is it now, wholly and solely to glorify God, and save souls? Has my eye been singly fixed on this, from the beginning hitherto? Had I never, have I not now, any mixture in my intention; any alloy of baser metal? Had I, or have I, no thought of worldly gain; "filthy lucre," as the apostle terms it? Had I at first, have I now, no secular view? no eye to honor or preferment? to a plentiful income; or, at least, a competency? a warm and comfortable livelihood?

Alas! my brother! "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Was a comfortable livelihood, then, your motive for entering into the ministry? And do you avow this in the face of the sun, and without one blush upon your cheek? I cannot compare you with Simon Magus; you are many degrees beneath him. He offered to give money for the gift of God, the power of conferring the Holy Ghost. Hereby, however, he showed that he set a higher value on the gift than on the money which he would have parted with for it. But you do not; you set a far higher value on the money than on the gift; insomuch that you do not desire, you will not accept of the gift, unless the money accompany it! The bishop said, when you was ordained, "Receive thou the Holy Ghost." But that was the least of your care. Let who will receive this, so you receive the money, the revenue of a good benefice. While you minister the word and sacraments before God, he gives the Holy Ghost to those who duly receive them; so that, "through your hands," likewise "the Holy Ghost is," in this sense, "given" now. But you have little concern whether he be or not; so little, that you will minister no longer, he shall be given no more either through your lips or hands, if you have no more money for your labor. O, Simon, Simon! what a saint wert thou, compared to many of the most honorable men now in Christendom!

Let not any either ignorantly or willfully mistake me. I would not "muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." I know the spiritual "laborer," too, "is worthy of his reward;" and that, if "we sow unto" our flock "spiritual things," it is meet that we "reap of their carnal things." I do not therefore blame, no, not in any degree, a minister's taking a yearly salary; but I blame his seeking it. The thing blamable is the having it in his view as the motive, or any part of the motive, for entering into this sacred office.

*Hic nigraë succus loliginis, hæc est
Ærugo mera.*

[“This is fell poison’s blackest juice.”—*Boscawen.*]

If preferment or honor or profit was in his eye, his eye was not single. And our Lord knew no medium between a single and an evil eye. The eye, therefore, which is not single is evil. It is a plain, adjudged case. He then that has any other design in undertaking or executing the office of a minister than purely this, to glorify God and save souls, his eye is not single. Of consequence, it is evil; and therefore his "whole body" must be "full of darkness." "The light which is in" him "is" very "darkness;" darkness covers his whole soul; he has no solid peace; he has no blessing from God; and there is no fruit of his labors.

It is no wonder that they who see no harm in this see no harm in adding one living to another, and, if they can, another to that; yet still wiping their mouth, and saying they have done no evil. In the very first step their eye was not single; therefore their mind was filled with darkness. So they stumble on still in the same mire, till their feet "stumble on the dark mountains."

It is pleaded, indeed, that "a small living will not maintain a large family." *Maintain!* How? It will not clothe them "in purple and fine linen;" nor enable them to fare "sumptuously every day." But will not the living you have now afford you and yours the plain necessities, yea, and conveniences, of life? Will it not maintain you in the frugal, Christian simplicity which becomes a minister of Christ? It will not maintain you in pomp and grandeur, in elegant luxury, in fashionable sensuality. So much the better. If your eyes were open, whatever your income was you would flee from these as from hell-fire.

It has been pleaded, secondly, "By having a larger income I am able to do more good." But dare you aver, in the presence of God, that it was singly with this view, only for this end, that you sought a larger income? If not, you are still condemned before God; your eye was not single. Do not therefore quibble and evade. This was not your motive of acting. It was not the desire to do more good, whether to the souls or bodies of men; it was not the love of God (you know it was not; your own conscience is as a thousand witnesses); but it was "the love of money," and "the desire of other things," which animated you in this pursuit. If, then, the word of God is true, you are in darkness still; it fills and covers your soul.

I might add, a larger income does not necessarily imply a capacity of doing more spiritual good. And this is the highest kind of good. It is good to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked; but

it is a far nobler good to "save souls from death," to "pluck" poor "brands out of the burning." And it is that to which you are peculiarly called, and to which you have solemnly promised to "bend all your studies and endeavors." But you are by no means sure that, by adding a second living to your first, you shall be more capable of doing good in this kind than you would have been had you laid out all your time and all your strength on your first flock.

"However, I shall be able to do more temporal good." You are not sure even of this. "If riches increase, they are increased that eat them." Perhaps your expenses may rise proportionately with your income. But if not, if you have a greater ability, shall you have a greater willingness to do good? You have no reason in the world to believe this. There are a thousand instances of the contrary. How many have less will when they have more money! Now, they have more money, they love it more; when they had little, they did their "diligence gladly to give of that little;" but since they have had much, they are so far from "giving plenteously" that they can hardly afford to give at all.

"But by my having another living I maintain a valuable man, who might otherwise want the necessaries of life." I answer, (1) Was this your whole and sole motive in seeking that other living? If not, this plea will not clear you from the charge; your eye was not single. (2) If it was, you may put it beyond dispute; you may prove at once the purity of your intention: make that valuable man rector of one of your parishes, and you are clear before God and man.

But what can be pleaded for those who have two or more flocks, and take care of none of them? who just look at them now and then for a few days, and then remove to a convenient distance, and say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry?"

Some years ago I was asking a plain man, "Ought not he who feeds the flock to eat of the milk of the flock?" He answered: "Friend, I have no objection to that. But what is that to him who does not feed the flock?" He stands on the far side of the hedge, and feeds himself. It is another who feeds the flock; and ought he to have the milk of the flock? What canst thou say for him?" Truly, nothing at all; and he will have nothing to say for himself when the great Shepherd shall pronounce that just sentence, "Bind" the unprofitable servant "hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness."

I have dwelt the longer on this head because a right intention is the first point of all, and the most necessary of all; inasmuch as the want of this cannot be supplied by any thing else whatsoever. It is the setting out wrong—a fault never to be amended, unless you return to the place whence you came and set out right. It is impossible, therefore, to lay too great stress upon a single eye, a pure intention; without which all our sacrifice, our prayers, sermons, and sacraments, are an abomination to the Lord.

I cannot dismiss this important article without touching upon one thing more. How many are directly concerned therein I leave to the Searcher of hearts.

You have been settled in a living or a curacy for some time. You are now going to exchange it for another. Why do you do this? For what reason do you prefer this before your former living or curacy? “Why, I had but fifty pounds a year where I was before, and now I shall have a hundred.” And is this your real motive of acting? the true reason why you make the exchange? “It is; and is it not a sufficient reason?” Yes, for a heathen; but not for one who calls himself a Christian.

Perhaps a more gross infatuation than this was never yet known upon earth. There goes one who is commissioned to be an ambassador of Christ, a shepherd of never dying souls, a watchman over the Israel of God, a steward of the mysteries which “angels desire to look into.” Where is he going? “To London, to Bristol, to Northampton.” Why does he go thither? “To get more money.” A tolerable reason for driving a herd of bullocks to one market rather than the other; though if a drover does this without any farther view he acts as a heathen, not a Christian. But what a reason for leaving the immortal souls over whom the Holy Ghost had made you overseer! And yet this is the motive which not only influences in secret, but is acknowledged openly and without a blush! Nay, it is excused, justified, defended; and that not by a few, here and there, who are apparently void both of piety and shame, but by numbers of seemingly religious men from one end of England to the other.

(2) Am I, secondly, such as I ought to be, with regard to my affections? I am taken from among, and ordained for, men in things pertaining to God. I stand between God and man, by the authority of the great Mediator, in the nearest and most endearing relation both to my Creator and to my fellow creatures.

Have I accordingly given my heart to God, and to my brethren for his sake? Do I love God with all my soul and strength? and my neighbor, every man, as myself? Does this love swallow me up, possess me whole, constitute my supreme happiness? Does it animate all my passions and tempers, and regulate all my powers and faculties? Is it the spring which gives rise to all my thoughts, and governs all my words and actions? If it does, not unto me, but unto God be the praise! If it does, not, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

At least, do I feel such a concern for the glory of God, and such a thirst after the salvation of men, that I am ready to do any thing, however contrary to my natural inclination, to part with any thing, however agreeable to me, to suffer any thing, however grievous to flesh and blood, so I may save one soul from hell? Is this my ruling temper at all times and in all places? Does it make all my labor light? If not, what a weariness is it! what a drudgery! Had I not far better hold the plow?

But is it possible this should be my ruling temper if I still love the world? No; certainly if I "love the world, the love of the Father is not in me." The love of God is not in me if I love money, if I love pleasure, so-called, or diversion. Neither is it in me if I am a lover of honor or praise or of dress or of good eating and drinking. Nay, even indolence, or the love of ease, is inconsistent with the love of God.

What a creature then is a covetous, an ambitious, a luxurious, an indolent, a diversion-loving clergyman! Is it any wonder that infidelity should increase where any of these are to be found? that many, comparing their spirit with their profession, should blaspheme that worthy name whereby they are called? But "woe be unto him by whom the offense cometh! It were good for that man if he had never been born." It were good for him now, rather than he should continue to turn the lame out of the way, "that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the depth of the sea!"

(3) May not you, who are of a better spirit, consider, thirdly, Am I such as I ought to be, with regard to my practice? Am I, in my private life, wholly devoted to God? Am I intent upon this one thing, to do in every point, "not my own will, but the will of him that sent me?" Do I carefully and resolutely abstain from every evil word and work? "from all appearance of evil?" from all indifferent things which might lay a stumbling-block in the way of the weak? Am I zealous of good works? As I have

time, do I do good to all men? and that in every kind, and in as high a degree as I am capable?

How do I behave in the public work whereunto I am called—in my pastoral character? Am I “a pattern” to my “flock” in word, in behavior, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity? Is my “word,” my daily conversation, “always in grace,” always “meet to minister grace to the hearers?” Is my behavior suitable to the dignity of my calling? Do I walk as Christ also walked? Does the love of God and man not only fill my heart, but shine through my whole conversation? Is the spirit, the temper which appears in all my words and actions, such as allows me to say with humble boldness, Herein “be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ?” Do all who have spiritual discernment take knowledge (judging of the tree by its fruits) that “the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God;” and that in all “simplicity and godly sincerity I have my conversation in the world?” Am I exemplarily pure from all worldly desire, from all vile and vain affections? Is my life one continued labor of love, one tract of praising God and helping man? Do I in every thing see “Him who is invisible?” And “beholding with open face the glory of the Lord,” am I “changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord?”

Brethren, is not this our calling even as we are Christians, but more eminently as we are ministers of Christ? And why (I will not say, do we we fall short, but why) are we satisfied with falling so short of it? Is there any necessity laid upon us of sinking so infinitely below our calling? Who hath required this at our hands? Certainly not He by whose authority we minister. Is not his will the same with regard to us as with regard to his first ambassadors? Is not his love and is not his power still the same as they were in the ancient days? Know we not that Jesus Christ “is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever?” Why then may not you be as “burning and shining lights” as those that shone seventeen hundred years ago! Do you desire to partake of the same burning love, of the same shining holiness? Surely you do. You cannot but be sensible it is the greatest blessing which can be bestowed on any child of man. Do you design it; aim at it; “press on to” this “mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?” Do you constantly and earnestly pray for it? Then, as the Lord liveth, ye shall attain. Only let us pray on, and “tarry at Jerusalem, till we be endued with power from on high.” Let us continue in all the ordinances of

God, particularly in meditating on his word, “in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily,” and, “as we have time, doing good to all men;” and then assuredly “the great Shepherd” of us and our flocks will “make us perfect in every good work to do his will, and work in us all that is well pleasing in his sight !” This is the desire and prayer of

Your brother and servant, in our common Lord,

JOHN WESLEY.

LONDON, *February 6, 1756.*

CONSECRATION OF CHURCHES AND BURIAL GROUNDS.

1. It has been a custom for some ages in Roman Catholic countries to have a particular form of consecration for all churches and chapels ; and not for these only, but for every thing pertaining to them, such as fonts, chalices, bells, sacerdotal vestments, and church-yards in particular. And all these customs universally prevailed in England as long as it was under the papal power.

2. From the time of our reformation from popery most of these customs fell into disuse. Unconsecrated bells were rung without scruple, and unconsecrated vestments worn. But some of them remained still ; the consecration of churches and church-yards in particular ; and many scrupled the performing divine service in an unconsecrated church, and could not consent that bodies should be buried in unconsecrated ground.

3. Accordingly, the consecrating of churches and church-yards has been practiced in England ever since. But it is a thing purely indifferent, being neither forbidden nor established by law. The case is different in Ireland. While the Earl of Strafford was lord lieutenant of that kingdom a law was made for the consecration, not only of churches, but of church-yards also. And a form of consecration for both was inserted in the Common Prayer Book which is used at this day, much resembling that which Archbishop Laud used in the consecration of St. Katherine Creed’s Church, in London.

4. But such a law has never passed in England, much less been inserted in our Common Prayer Book. However, such consecration has been generally practiced, though not authorized by the Legislature. “Is it then illegal ?” That word is capable of a twofold meaning. It may mean either without any law in its

favor or against law. I do not conceive it to be illegal in the latter sense. Perhaps it is in the former. I do not know any law that enjoins or even permits it.

5. And certainly, as it is not enjoined by the law of the land, so it is not enjoined by the law of God. Where do we find one word in the New Testament enjoining any such thing? Neither do I remember any precedent of it in the purest ages of the Church. It seems to have entered and gradually spread itself with the other innovations and superstitions of the Church of Rome. "Do you think it then a superstitious practice?" Perhaps it is not, if it be practiced as a thing indifferent. But if it be done as a necessary thing, then it is flatly superstitious.

6. For this reason I never wished that any bishop should consecrate any chapel or burial-ground of mine. Indeed, I should not dare to suffer it, as I am clearly persuaded the thing is wrong in itself, being not authorized either by any law of God or by any law of the land. In consequence of which I conceive that either the clerk or the sexton may as well consecrate the church or the church-yard as the bishop.

7. With regard to the latter, the church-yard, I know not who could answer that plain question: "You say this is consecrated ground, so many feet broad, and so many long. But pray how deep is the consecrated ground?" "*Deep!* What does that signify?" O, a great deal. For if my grave be dug too deep I may happen to get out of the consecrated ground. And who can tell what unhappy consequences may follow from this?

8. I take the whole of this practice to be a mere relic of Romish superstition. And I wonder that any sensible Protestant should think it right to countenance it, much more that any reasonable man should plead for the necessity of it. Surely, it is high time now that we should be guided, not by custom, but by Scripture and reason.

DUMFRIES, *May 14, 1788.*

HOW FAR IS IT THE DUTY OF A CHRISTIAN MINISTER TO PREACH POLITICS?

1. It is impossible to answer this question before it is understood. We must first, therefore, endeavor to understand it, and then it will be easy to answer.

2. There is a plain command in the Bible, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." But notwithstanding:

this many that are called religious people speak evil of him continually. And they speak many things that are palpably false, particularly when they affirm him to be a weak man; whereas a nobleman, who is not at all prejudiced in his favor, when he was pressed to speak, made this honest declaration: "Sir, I know him well; and I judge the king to be one of the most sensible men in Europe. His ministers are no fools; but his majesty is able to wind them all round his finger."

3. Now, when a clergyman comes into a place where this and many more stories equally false have been diligently propagated against the king, and are generally believed, if he guards the people against this evil speaking by refusing those slanders, many cry out, "O, he is preaching politics."

4. If you mean this by the term it is the bounden duty of every Christian minister to preach politics, it is our bounden duty to refute these vile aspersions in public as well as in private. But this can be done only now and then, when it comes naturally in our way; for it is our main and constant business to "preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

5. Again, many who do not so freely censure the king speak all manner of evil of his ministers. If any misfortune befalls us at home or abroad, by sea or land, it is "all their fault." If one commander in America is surprised with all his forces when he is dead drunk, "Lord North deserves to be hanged." If General Burgoyne or Lord Cornwallis is betrayed into their enemy's hand, all the blame is laid on our ministers at home. But still the king is wounded through their sides; the blame glances from them to him. Yet if we say a word in defense of them (which is in effect defending him), this also is preaching politics.

6. It is always difficult and frequently impossible for private men to judge of the measures taken by men in public offices. We do not see many of the grounds which determine them to act in this or the contrary manner. Gradually, therefore, it behooves us to be silent, as we may suppose they know their own business best; but when they are censured without any color of reason, and when an odium is cast on the king by that means, we ought to preach politics in this sense also; we ought publicly to confute those unjust censures, only remembering still that this is rarely to be done, and only when fit occasion offers, it being our main business to preach "repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

JOHN WESLEY.

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING PRONUNCIATION AND GESTURE.

SECTION I.

HOW WE MAY SPEAK SO AS TO BE HEARD WITHOUT DIFFICULTY
AND WITH PLEASURE.

1. BEFORE we enter upon particular rules, I would advise all who can (1) to study the art of speaking betimes, and to practice it as often as possible before they have contracted any of the common imperfections or vices of speaking; for these may easily be avoided at first, but when they are once learned it is extremely difficult to unlearn them. I advise all young persons (2) to be governed in speaking, as in all other things, by reason rather than example, and therefore to have an especial care whom they imitate therein, and to imitate only what is right in their manner of speaking, not their blemishes and imperfections.

2. The first business of a speaker is so to speak that he may be heard and understood with ease. In order to this it is a great advantage to have a clear, strong voice; such, at least, as will fill the place where you speak so as to be heard by every person in it. To strengthen a weak voice, read or speak something aloud for at least half an hour every morning, but take care not to strain your voice at first; begin low and raise it by degrees to the height.

3. If you are apt to falter in your speech, read something in private daily, and pronounce every word and syllable so distinctly that they may all have their full sound and proportion. If you are apt to stammer at such and such particular expressions, take particular care, first, to pronounce them plainly. When you are once able to do this you may learn to pronounce them more fluently at your leisure.

The chief faults of speaking are:

(1) The speaking too loud. This is disagreeable to the hearers as well as inconvenient for the speaker. For they must impute it either to ignorance or affectation, which is never so inexcusable as in preaching.

Every man's voice should indeed fill the place where he speaks; but if it exceeds its natural key it will be neither sweet, nor soft, nor agreeable, were it only on this account, that he cannot then give every word its proper and distinguishing sound.

(2) The speaking too low. This is of the two more disagreeable than the former. Take care, therefore, to keep between the

extremes, to preserve the key, the command of your voice, and to adapt the loudness of it to the place where you are, or the number of persons to whom you speak.

In order to this, consider whether your voice be naturally loud or low; and if it incline to either extreme, correct this first in your ordinary conversation. If it be too low, converse with those that are deaf; if too loud, with those who speak softly.

(3) The speaking in a thick, cluttering manner. Some persons mumble or swallow some words or syllables, and do not utter the rest articulately or distinctly. This is sometimes owing to a natural defect, sometimes to a sudden flutter of spirits, but oftener to a bad habit.

To cure this accustom yourself, both in conversation and reading, to pronounce every word distinctly. Observe how full a sound some give to every word, and labor to imitate them. If no other way avail, do as Demosthenes did, who cured himself of this natural defect by repeating orations every day with pebbles in his mouth.

(4) The speaking too fast. This is a common fault, but not a little one, particularly when we speak of the things of God. It may be cured by habituating yourself to attend to the weight, sense, and propriety of every word you speak.

(5) The speaking too slow is not a common fault, and when we are once warned of it it may be easily avoided.

(6) The speaking with an irregular, desultory, and uneven voice, raised or depressed unnaturally or unseasonably. To cure this you should take care not to begin your periods either too high or too low; for that would necessarily lead you to an unnatural and improper variation of the voice. And remember never either to raise or sink your voice without a particular reason, arising either from the length of the period or the sense or spirit of what you speak.

(7) But the greatest and most common fault of all is the speaking with a tone. Some have a womanish, squeaking tone; some a singing or canting one; some a high, swelling, theatrical tone, laying too much emphasis on every sentence; some have an awful, solemn tone; others an odd, whimsical, whining one not to be expressed in words.

To avoid all kinds of unnatural tones the only rule is this, endeavor to speak in public just as you do in common conversation. Attend to your subject and deliver it in the same manner as if you were talking of it to a friend. This, if carefully observed,

will correct both this and almost all the other faults of a bad pronunciation.

For a good pronunciation is nothing but a natural, easy, and graceful variation of the voice, suitable to the nature and importance of the sentiments we deliver.

4. If you would be heard with pleasure, in order to make the deeper impression on your hearers, first study to render your voice as soft and sweet as possible, and the more if it be naturally harsh, hoarse, or obstreperous, which may be cured by constant exercise. By carefully using this every morning you may in a short time wear off these defects, and contract such a smooth and tuneful delivery as will recommend whatever you speak.

5. Secondly, labor to avoid the odious custom of coughing and spitting while you are speaking. And if at some times you cannot wholly avoid it, yet take care you do not stop in the middle of a sentence, but only at such times as will least interrupt the sense of what you are delivering.

6. Above all take care, thirdly, to vary your voice according to the matter on which you speak. Nothing more grates the ear than a voice still in the same key. And yet nothing is more common, although this monotone is not only unpleasant to the ear, but destroys the effect of what is spoken.

7. The best way to learn how to vary the voice is to observe common discourse. Take notice how you speak yourself in ordinary conversation, and how others speak on various occasions. After the very same manner you are to vary your voice in public, allowing for the largeness of the place and the distance of the hearers.

SECTION II.

GENERAL RULES FOR THE VARIATION OF THE VOICE.

1. The voice may be varied in three ways: First, as to height or lowness; secondly, as to vehemence or softness; thirdly, as to swiftness or slowness.

And (1) as to height, a medium between the extremes is carefully to be observed. You must neither strain your voice by raising it always to the highest note it can reach, nor sink it always to the lowest note, which would be to murmur rather than to speak.

(2) As to vehemence, have a care how you force your voice to the last extremity. You cannot hold this long without danger of its cracking and failing you on a sudden. Nor yet ought you to

speaking in too faint and remiss a manner, which destroys all the force and energy of what is spoken.

(3) As to swiftness, you ought to moderate the voice so as to avoid all precipitation, otherwise you give the hearers no time to think, and so are not likely either to convince or to persuade them. Yet neither should you speak slower than men generally do in common conversation. It is a fault to draw out your words too slow or to make needless breaks or pauses. Nay, to drawl is (of the two) worse than to hurry. The speech ought not to drop, but to flow along. But then it ought to flow like a gliding stream, not as a rapid torrent.

2. Yet let it be observed that the medium I recommend does not consist in an indivisible point. It admits of a considerable latitude. As to the height or lowness of the voice, there are five or six notes whereby it may be varied between the highest and the lowest, so here is abundant room for variation without falling into either extreme. There is also sufficient room between the extremes of violence and of softness to pronounce either more vehemently or more mildly, as different subjects may require. And as to swiftness or slowness, though you avoid both extremes, you may, nevertheless, speak faster or slower, and that in several degrees, as best answers the subject and passions of your discourse.

3. But it should likewise be observed that the voice ought not to be varied too hastily in any of these respects; but the difference is to be made by degrees, and almost insensibly, too sudden a change being unnatural and affected, and consequently disagreeable to the hearers.

SECTION III.

PARTICULAR RULES FOR VARYING THE VOICE.

1. If you speak of natural things merely to make the hearers understand them, there needs only a clear and distinct voice. But if you would display the wisdom and power of God therein, do it with a stronger and more solemn accent.

2. The good and honorable actions of men should be described with a full and lofty accent; wicked and infamous actions with a strong and earnest voice, and such a tone as expresses horror and detestation.

3. In congratulating the happy events of life we speak with a lively and cheerful accent; in relating misfortunes (as in funeral orations) with a slow and mournful one.

4. The voice should also be varied according to the greatness or importance of the subject ; it being absurd either to speak in a lofty manner where the subject is of little concern, or to speak of great and important affairs with a low, unconcerned, and familiar voice.

5. On all occasions let the thing you are to speak be deeply imprinted on your own heart, and when you are sensibly touched yourself you will easily touch others by adjusting your voice to every passion which you feel.

6. Love is shown by a soft, smooth, and melting voice; hate by a sharp and sullen one; joy by a full and flowing one; grief by a dull, languishing tone, sometimes interrupted by a sigh or groan; fear is expressed by a trembling and hesitating voice; boldness, by speaking loud and strong; anger is shown by a sharp and impetuous tone, taking the breath often and speaking short; compassion requires a soft and submissive voice.

7. After the expression of any violent passion you should gradually lower your voice again. Readiness in varying it on all kinds of subjects, as well as passions, is best acquired by frequently reading or repeating aloud either dialogues, select plays, or such discourses as come nearest to the dramatic style.

8. You should begin a discourse low, both as it expresses modesty and as it is the best for your voice and strength, and yet so as to be heard by all that are present. You may afterward rise as the matter shall require. The audience likewise, being calm and unmoved at first, are best suited by a cool and dispassionate address.

9. Yet this rule admits of some exceptions ; for on some extraordinary occasions you may begin a discourse abruptly and passionately, and consequently with a warm and passionate accent.

10. You may speak a little louder in laying down what you design to prove, and explaining it to your hearers. But you need not speak with any warmth or emotion yet ; it is enough if you speak articulately and distinctly.

11. When you prove your point and refute your adversary's objections, there is need of more earnestness and exertion of voice. And here chiefly it is that you are to vary your voice, according to the rules above recited.

12. A little pause may then precede the conclusion, in which you may gradually rise to the utmost strength of pronunciation, and finish all with a lively, cheerful voice, expressing joy and satisfaction.

13. An exclamation requires a loud and strong voice, and so does an oath or strong asseveration; as, "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "I call God to record upon my soul."

14. In a *prosopopœia* the voice should be varied according to the character of the persons introduced; in an *apostrophe*, according to the circumstances of the person or thing to which you address your speech, which, if directed either to God or to inanimate things, ought to be louder than usual.

15. In reciting and answering objections the voice should be varied, as if two persons were speaking. And so in dialogues, or whenever several persons are introduced as disputing or talking together.

16. In a *climax* the voice must be gradually raised to answer every step of the figure. In an *aposiopesis* the voice, which was raised to introduce it, must be lowered considerably. In an *antithesis* the points are to be distinguished, and the former to be pronounced with a stronger tone than the latter; but in an *anadiplosis* the word repeated is pronounced the second time louder and stronger than the first.

17. Take care never to make a pause in the middle of a word or sentence, but only where there is such a pause in the sense as requires, or, at least, allows of it. You may make a short pause after every period, and begin the next generally a little lower than you concluded the last, but on some occasions a little higher, which the nature of the subject will easily determine.

18. I would likewise advise every speaker to observe those who speak well, that he may not pronounce any word in an improper manner; and in case of doubt, let him not be ashamed to ask how such a word is to be pronounced; as neither to desire others that they would inform him whenever they hear him pronounce any word improperly.

19. Lastly, take care not to sink your voice too much at the conclusion of a period, but pronounce the very last words loud and distinct, especially if they have but a weak and dull sound of themselves.

SECTION IV.

OF GESTURE.

1. That this silent language of your face and hands may move the affections of those that see and hear you, it must be well adjusted to the subject as well as to the passions you desire

either to express or excite. It must likewise be free from all affectation, and such as appears to be the mere natural result both of the things you speak and of the affection that moves you to speak them. And the whole is so to be managed that there may be nothing in all the dispositions and motions of your body to offend the eyes of the spectators.

2. But it is more difficult to find out the faults of your own gesture than those of your pronunciation. For a man may hear his own voice, but he cannot see his own face, neither can he observe the several motions of his own body, at least, but imperfectly. To remedy this you may use a large looking-glass, as Demosthenes did, and thereby observe and learn to avoid every disagreeable or unhandsome gesture.

3. There is but one way better than this, which is to have some excellent pattern as often as may be before your eyes, and to desire some skillful and faithful friend to observe all your motions, and inform you which are proper and which are not.

4. As to the motion of the body, it ought not to change its place or posture every moment ; neither, on the other hand, to stand like a stock in one fixed and immovable posture, but to move in a natural and graceful manner, as various circumstances may require.

5. The head ought not to be held up too high, nor clownishly thrust forward ; neither to be cast down and hang, as it were, on the breast, nor to lean always on one or the other side, but to be kept modestly and decently upright in its natural state and position. Farther, it ought neither to be kept immovable as a statue, nor to be continually moving and throwing itself about. To avoid both extremes, it should be turned gently, as occasion is, sometimes one way, sometimes the other ; and at other times remain looking straight forward to the middle of the auditory. Add to this that it ought always to be turned on the same side with the hands and body ; only in refusing a thing, for this we do with the right hand, turning the head at the same time to the left.

6. But it is the face which gives the greatest life to action ; of this, therefore, you must take the greatest care, that nothing may appear disagreeable in it, since it is continually in the view of all but yourself. And there is nothing can prevent this but the looking-glass or a friend who will deal faithfully with you. You should adapt all its movements to the subject you treat of, the passions you would raise, and the persons to whom you speak. Let

love or joy spread a cheerfulness over your face ; hatred, sorrow, or fear, a gloominess. Look with gravity and authority on your inferiors ; on your superiors, with boldness mixed with respect.

7. You should always be casting your eyes upon some or other of your auditors, and moving them from one side to the other, with an air of affection and regard ; looking them decently in the face, one after another, as we do in familiar conversation. Your aspect should always be pleasant and your looks direct, neither severe or askew ; unless you design to express contempt or scorn, which may require that particular aspect.

8. If you speak of heaven or things above, lift up your eyes ; if of things beneath, cast them down ; and so if you speak of things of disgrace ; but raise them in calling God to witness, or speaking of things wherein you glory.

9. The mouth must never be turned awry, neither must you bite or lick your lips or shrug up your shoulders or lean upon your elbow, all which give just offense to the spectators.

10. We make use of the hand a thousand different ways ; only very little at the beginning of a discourse. Concerning this, you may observe the rules following : (1) Never clap your hands nor thump the pulpit. (2) Use the right hand most ; and when you use the left, let it be only to accompany the other. (3) The right hand may be gently applied to the breast when you speak of your own faculties, heart, or conscience. (4) You must begin your action with your speech, and end it when you make an end of speaking. (5) The hands should seldom be lifted higher than the eyes, nor let down lower than the breast. (6) Your eyes should always have your hands in view, so that they you speak to may see your eyes, your mouth, and your hands all moving in concert with each other and expressing the same thing. (7) Seldom stretch out your arms sideways more than half a foot from the trunk of your body. (8) Your hands are not to be in perpetual motion ; this the ancients called the babbling of the hands.

11. There are many other things relating to action as well as utterance which cannot easily be expressed in writing. These you must learn by practice ; by hearing a good speaker and speaking often before him.

12. But remember while you are actually speaking you must not be studying any other motions, but use those that naturally arise from the subject of your discourse, from the place where you speak, and the characters of the persons whom you address.

13. I would advise you, lastly, to observe these rules as far as

things permit, even in your common conversation, till you have got a perfect habit of observing them, so that they are, as it were, natural to you. And whenever you hear an eminent speaker, observe with the utmost attention what conformity there is between his action and utterance and these rules. You may afterward imitate him at home, till you have made his graces your own. And when once, by such assistances as these, you have acquired a good habit of speaking, you will no more need any tedious reflections upon this art, but will speak as easily, as gracefully.

A WORD TO A SABBATH-BREAKER.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

HAVE you forgotten who spoke these words, or do you set him at defiance? Do you bid him do his worst? Have a care. You are not stronger than he. “Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth; but woe unto the man that contendeth with his Maker. He sitteth on the circle of the heavens; and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him!”

“Six days shalt thou do all manner of work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” It is not thine, but God’s day. He claims it for his own. He always did claim it for his own, even from the beginning of the world. “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” He *hallowed* it; that is, he made it holy; he reserved it for his own service. He appointed that as long as the sun or the moon, the heavens and the earth should endure, the children of men should spend this day in the worship of Him who “gave them life and breath and all things.”

Shall a man, then, rob God? And art thou the man? Consider, think what thou art doing? Is it not God who giveth thee all thou hast? Every day thou livest, is it not his gift? And wilt thou give him none? Nay, wilt thou deny him what is his own already? He will not, he cannot quit his claim. This day is God’s. It was so from the beginning. It will be so to the end of the world. This he cannot give to another. O, “render unto God the things that are God’s” now; to-day, while it is called to-day!”

For whose sake does God lay claim to this day—for his sake

or for thine? Doubtless, not for his own. He needeth not thee nor any child of man. "Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? If thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou art righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand?" For thy own sake, therefore, God thy maker doeth this. For thy own sake he calleth thee to serve him. For thy own sake he demands a part of thy time to be restored to him that gave thee all. Acknowledge his love. Learn while thou art on earth to praise the King of heaven. Spend this day as thou hopest to spend that day which never shall have an end.

The Lord not only hallowed the Sabbath day, but he hath also blessed it. So that you are an enemy to yourself. You throw away your own blessing if you neglect to "keep this day holy." It is a day of special grace. The King of heaven now sits upon his mercy-seat in a more gracious manner than on other days, to bestow blessings on those who observe it. If you love your own soul, can you then forbear laying hold on so happy an opportunity? Awake, arise, let God give thee his blessing! Receive a token of his love! Cry to him that thou mayest find the riches of his grace and mercy in Christ Jesus! You do not know how few more of these days of salvation you may have. And how dreadful would it be to be called hence in the abuse of his proffered mercy!

O, what mercy hath God prepared for you if you do not trample it under foot! "What mercy hath he prepared for them that fear him, even before the sons of men!" A peace which the world cannot give; joy that no man taketh from you; rest from doubt and fear and sorrow of heart; and love, the beginning of heaven. And are not these for you? Are they not all purchased for you by him who loved you and gave himself for you—for you, a sinner—you, a rebel against God—you, who have so long crucified him afresh? Now, look unto him whom you have pierced? Now say, Lord, it is enough. I have fought against thee long enough. I yield, I yield. "Jesus, master, have mercy upon me!"

On this day above all cry aloud and spare not to the "God who heareth prayer." This is the day he hath set apart for the good of your soul, both in this world and that which is to come. Never more disappoint the design of his love, either by worldly business or idle diversions. Let not a little thing keep you from the house

of God, either in the forenoon or afternoon. And spend as much as you can of the rest of the day either in repeating what you have heard or in reading the Scripture or in private prayer or talking of the things of God. Let his love be ever before your eyes. Let his praise be ever in your mouth. You have lived many years in folly and sin ; now live one day unto the Lord.

Do not ask any more, "Where is the harm if, after church, I spend the remainder of the day in the fields or in the public house or in taking a little diversion?" You know where is the harm. Your own heart tells you so plain that you cannot but hear. It is a base misspending of your talent and a barefaced contempt of God and his authority. You have heard of God's judgments even upon earth against the profaners of this day. And yet these are but as drops of that storm of "fiery indignation which will" at last "consume his adversaries."

Glory be to God who hath now given you a sense of this. You now know this was always designed for a day of blessing. May you never again, by your idleness or profaneness, turn that blessing into a curse ! What folly, what madness would that be ! And in what sorrow and anguish would it end ! For yet a little while and death will close up the day of grace and mercy. And those who despise them now will have no more Sabbaths or sacraments or prayers forever. Then how will they wish to recover that which they now so idly cast away ! But all in vain. For they will then "find no place for repentance, though they should seek it carefully with tears."

O, my friend, know the privilege you enjoy. Now "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Your day of life and of grace is far spent. The night of death is at hand. Make haste to use the time you have ; improve the last hours of your day. Now provide "the things which make for your peace," that you may stand before the face of God forever.

A WORD TO A SWEARER.

SWEAR not at all, saith the Lord God of heaven and earth. Art thou without God in the world ? Hast thou no knowledge of God, no concern about him ? Is not God in all thy thoughts ?

Dost thou believe there is a God ? Where ? In heaven only ? Nay, he filleth all in all ! Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord,

and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth?

Whither wilt thou go, then, from his Spirit? Or whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou go up into heaven, God is there; if thou go down into hell, he is there also. If thou take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there his hand shall touch thee, and his right hand shall hold thee.

God seeth thee now; his eyes are upon thee; he observes all thy thoughts; he compasseth thy path; he counteth all thy steps; he is acquainted with all thy ways; by him thy actions are weighed; nor is there a word in thy tongue but he knoweth it altogether.

And does not power belong unto God; yea, all power in heaven and in earth? Is he not able, even while thou readest or hearest these words, to crush thee into nothing? Can he not just now crumble thee into dust, or bid the earth open and swallow thee up? O, do not set him at naught! do not provoke him thus! do not fly in his face! Can he not in a moment cast forth his lightnings and tear thee, shoot out his arrows and consume thee? What hinders him from cutting thee off this instant; sending thee now, now, quick into hell?

Would God do thee any wrong therein? What! in giving thee the request of thy own lips? What words were those thou spakest but now? Did not God hear? Why, thou didst pray to God to send thee to hell! Thou didst ask him to damn thy soul! How, art thou in love with damnation? Art thou in haste to dwell with everlasting burnings; to be day and night tormented in that flame, without a drop of water to cool thy tongue?

Dost thou pray for this? I pray God it may never be either my lot or thine. Alas, my brother! What if God take thee at thy word! What if he say, Be it unto thee even as thou wilt! What if he give thee thy wish, and let thee drop into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!

I had rather thou shouldest go to the paradise of God. Hadst not thou? Is not heaven better than hell? Art thou not convinced of this in thy own conscience? Why, then, amend thy prayer. Cry to God: "Save my soul, for I have sinned against thee! Save me from all my sins. Save me from all my evil words, and evil works; from my evil tempers, and evil desires! Make me holy as thou art holy! Let me know thee, and love thee, and serve thee, now and forever!"

And is not God willing to do this? Surely he is; for God loveth thee. He gave his only Son that thou mightest not perish, but have everlasting life. Christ died for thee; and he that believeth on him hath everlasting life. Mark that word, he *hath* it. He hath it now. He hath the beginning of heaven even upon earth; for his soul is filled with the love of God; and the love of God is heaven. He that truly believes on Jesus Christ hath a peace which earth cannot give; his mind is always calm; he hath learned in every state therewith to be content; he is always easy, quiet, well pleased; always happy, in life and in death; for a believer is not afraid to die; he desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ; he desires to quit this house of clay, and to be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; to hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and to see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven; to stand at his right hand, and hear that word (which I earnestly beg of God you and I may hear), "Come, ye blessed, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world!"

A WORD TO A DRUNKARD.

1. ARE you a man? God make you a man; but you make yourself a beast. Wherein does a man differ from a beast? Is it not chiefly in reason and understanding? But you throw away what reason you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast; not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor filthy swine. Go and wallow with them in the mire! Go, drink on, till thy nakedness be uncovered, and shameful spewing be on thy glory!

2. O, how honorable is a beast of God's making compared to one who makes himself a beast! But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you, and gain others, which perhaps were not in you; at least, you heighten and increase them. You cause the fire of anger or malice or lust to burn seven times hotter than before. At the same time you grieve the Spirit of God, till you drive him quite away from you; and whatever spark of good remained in your soul you drown and quench at once.

3. So you are now just fit for every work of the devil, having cast off all that is good or virtuous, and filled your heart with every thing that is bad, that is earthly, sensual, devilish. You

have forced the Spirit of God to depart from you, for you would take none of his reproof ; and you have given yourself up into the hands of the devil, to be led blindfold by him at his will.

4. Now, what should hinder the same thing from befalling you which befell him who was asked which was the greatest sin, adultery, drunkenness, or murder ; and which of the three he had rather commit ? He said drunkenness was the least. Soon after he got drunk ; he then met with another man's wife, and ravished her. The husband coming to help her, he murdered him. So drunkenness, adultery, and murder went together.

5. I have heard a story of a poor wild Indian, far wiser than either him or you. The English gave him a cask of strong liquor. The next morning he called his friends together, and, setting it in the midst of them, said, "These white men have given us poison. This man" (calling him by his name) "was a wise man, and would hurt none but his enemies ; but as soon as he had drunk of this he was mad, and would have killed his own brother. We will not be poisoned." He then broke the cask, and poured the liquor upon the sand.

6. On what motive do you thus poison yourself ? only for the pleasure of doing it ? What ! will you make yourself a beast, or rather a devil ? Will you run the hazard of committing all manner of villainies ; and this only for the poor pleasure of a few moments, while the poison is running down your throat ? O, never call yourself a Christian ! Never call yourself a man ! You are sunk beneath the greater part of the beasts that perish.

7. Do you not rather drink for the sake of company ? Do you not do it to oblige your friends ? "For company," do you say ? How is this ? Will you take a dose of ratsbane for company ? If twenty men were to do so before you, would not you desire to be excused ? How much more may you desire to be excused from going to hell for company ? But, "to oblige your friends : " what manner of friends are they who would be obliged by your destroying yourself ? who would suffer, nay, entice you so to do ? They are villains. They are your worst enemies. They are just such friends as a man that would smile in your face and stab you to the heart.

8. O, do not aim at any excuse ! Say not, as many do, "I am no one's enemy but my own." If it were so, what a poor saying is this, "I give none but my own soul to the devil." Alas ! Is not that too much ? Why shouldest thou give him thy own soul ? Do it not. Rather give it to God.

But it is not so. You are an enemy to your king, whom you rob hereby of a useful subject. You are an enemy to your country, which you defraud of the service you might do, either as a man or as a Christian. You are an enemy to every man that sees you in your sin ; for your example may move him to do the same. A drunkard is a public enemy. I should not wonder at all if you was (like Cain of old) afraid that "every man who meeteth you should slay you."

9. Above all, you are an enemy to God, the great God of heaven and earth ; to him who surrounds you on every side, and can just now send you quick into hell. Him you are continually affronting to his face. You are setting him at open defiance. O, do not provoke him thus any more ! Fear the great God !

10. You are an enemy to Christ, to the Lord that bought you. You fly in the face of his authority. You set at naught both his sovereign power and tender love. You crucify him afresh ; and when you call him your Saviour, what is it less than to "betray him with a kiss ?"

11. O, repent ! See and feel what a wretch you are. Pray to God to convince you in your inmost soul. How often have you crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame ! Pray that you may know yourself, inwardly and outwardly, all sin, all guilt, all helplessness. Then cry out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me !" Thou lamb of God, take away my sins ! Grant me thy peace. Justify the ungodly. O, bring me to the blood of sprinkling, that I may go and sin no more, that I may love much, having had so much forgiven !

A WORD TO AN UNHAPPY WOMAN.

1. **WHITHER** are you going, to heaven or hell ? Do you not know ? Do you never think about it ? Why do you not ? Are you never to die ? Nay, it is appointed for all men to die. And what comes after ? Only heaven or hell. Will the not thinking of death put it farther off ? No ; not a day ; not one hour. Or will your not thinking of hell save you from it ? O, no ; you know better. And you know that every moment you are nearer hell, whether you are thinking of it or no ; that is, if you are not nearer heaven. You must be nearer one or the other.

2. I entreat you, think a little on that plain question, Are you going toward heaven or hell? To which of the two does this way lead? Is it possible you should be ignorant? Did you never hear that neither adulterers nor fornicators shall inherit the kingdom? that fornicators and adulterers God will judge? And how dreadful will be their sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels!"

3. Surely you do not mock at the word of God! You are not yet sunk so low as this. Consider, then, that awful word, "Know ye not that ye are the temples of God?" Was not you designed for the Spirit of God to dwell in? Was not you devoted to God in baptism? But "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." O, do not provoke him to it any longer! Tremble before the great, the holy God!

4. Know you not that your body is, or ought to be, the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? Know you not that "you are not your own? for you are bought with a price." And, O, how great a price! "You are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." O, when will you glorify God with your body and your spirit, which are God's!

5. Ah, poor wretch! How far are you from this? How low are you fallen! You yourself are ashamed of what you do. Are you not? Conscience speak in the sight of God! Does not your own heart condemn you at this very hour? Do not you shudder at the condition you are in? Dare, for once, to lay your hand upon your breast, and ask, "What am I doing? And what must the end of these things be?" Destruction both of body and soul.

6. *Destruction of body as well as of soul!* Can it be otherwise? Are you not plunging into misery in this world, as well as in the world to come? What have you brought upon yourself already? what infamy? what contempt? How could you now appear among those relations and friends that were once so loved, and so loving to you? What pangs have you given them? How do some of them still weep for you in secret places? And will you not weep for yourself when you see nothing before you but want, pain, diseases, death? O, spare yourself! Have pity upon your body, if not your soul! Stop! before you rot above ground and perish!

7. Do you ask, What shall I do? First, sin no more. First

of all, secure this point. Now, this instant, now, escape for your life; stay not; look not behind you. Whatever you do, sin no more; starve, die, rather than sin. Be more careful for your soul than your body. Take care of that, too; but of your poor soul first.

8. "But you have no friend; none at least that is able to help you." Indeed you have: one that is a present help in time of trouble. You have a friend that has all power in heaven and earth, even Jesus Christ the righteous. He loved sinners of old; and he does so still. He then suffered the publicans and harlots to come unto him. And one of them washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. I would to God you were in her place! Say, Amen! Lift up your heart, and it shall be done. How soon will he say, "Woman, be of good cheer; thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee. Go in peace. Sin no more. Love much; for thou hast much forgiven."

9. Do you still ask, But what shall I do for bread; for food to eat, and raiment to put on? I answer, in the name of the Lord God (and, mark well! his promise shall not fail), "Seek thou first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto thee."

Settle it first in your heart, Whatever I have or have not, I will not have everlasting burnings. I will not sell my soul and body for bread; better even starve on earth than burn in hell. Then ask help of God. He is not slow to hear. He hath never failed them that seek him. He who feeds the young ravens that call upon him will not let you perish for lack of sustenance. He will provide in a way you thought not of, if you seek him with your whole heart! O, let your heart be toward him; seek him from the heart! Fear sin more than want, more than death. And cry mightily to him who bore your sins, till you have bread to eat that the world knoweth not of; till you have angels' food, even the love of God shed abroad in your heart; till you can say, "Now I know that my Redeemer liveth, that he hath loved me and given himself for me; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God!"

A WORD TO A SMUGGLER.

I. "WHAT is smuggling?" It is the importing, selling, or buying of run goods; that is, those which have not paid the duty appointed by law to be paid to the king.

1. Importing run goods. All smuggling vessels do this with a high hand. It is the chief, if not the whole business of these to bring goods which have not paid duty.

2. Next to these are all sea captains, officers, sailors, or passengers who import any thing without paying the duty which the law requires.

3. A third sort of smugglers are all those who sell any thing which has not paid the duty.

4. A fourth sort, those who buy tea, liquors, linen, handkerchiefs, or any thing else which has not paid duty.

II. "But why should they not? What harm is there in it?"

1. I answer, open smuggling (such as was common a few years ago, on the southern coasts especially) is robbing on the highway; and as much harm as there is in this, just so much there is in smuggling. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than a highwayman. They may shake hands together.

2. Private smuggling is just the same with picking of pockets. There is full as much harm in this as in that. A smuggler of this kind is no honester than a pickpocket. These may shake hands together.

3. But open smugglers are worse than common highwaymen, and private smugglers are worse than common pickpockets. For it is undoubtedly worse to rob our father than one we have no obligation to.

And it is worse still, far worse, to rob a good father, one who sincerely loves us, and is at that very time doing all he can to provide for us and to make us happy. Now, this is exactly the present case. King George is the father of all his subjects; and not only so, but he is a good father. He shows his love to them on all occasions, and is continually doing all that is in his power to make his subjects happy.

4. An honest man, therefore, would be ashamed to ask, Where is the harm in robbing such a father? His own reason, if he had any at all, would give him a speedy answer. But you are a Christian, are you not? You say you believe the Bible. Then I say to you, in the name of God and in the name of Christ, "Thou shalt not steal." Thou shalt not take what is not thine

own, what is the right of another man. But the duties appointed by law are the king's right, as much as your coat is your right. He has as good a right to them as you have to this; these are his property as much as this is yours. Therefore, you are as much a thief if you take his duties as a man is that takes your coat.

5. If you believe the Bible, I say to you, as our Saviour said to them of old time, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." If, then, you mind our Saviour's words, be as careful to honor the king as to fear God. Be as exact in giving the king what is due to the king as in giving God what is due to God. Upon no account whatever rob or defraud him of the least thing which is his lawful property.

6. If you believe the Bible, I say to you, as St. Paul said to the ancient Christians, "Render unto all their dues;" in particular, "custom to whom custom is due, tribute to whom tribute." Now, custom is by the laws of England due to the king; therefore, every one in England is bound to pay it him. So that robbing the king herein is abundantly worse than common stealing or common robbing on the highway.

7. And so it is on another account also; for it is a general robbery; it is, in effect, not only robbing the king, but robbing every honest man in the nation. For the more the king's duties are diminished, the more the taxes must be increased. And these lie upon us all; they are the burden, not of some, but of all the people of England. Therefore, every smuggler is a thief-general, who picks the pockets both of the king and all his fellow subjects. He wrongs them all; and, above all, the honest traders, many of whom he deprives of their maintenance, constraining them either not to sell their goods at all, or to sell them to no profit. Some of them are tempted hereby, finding they cannot get bread for their families, to turn thieves too. And then you are accountable for their sin as well as your own; you bring their blood upon your own head. Calmly consider this, and you will never more ask what harm there is in smuggling.

III. 1. But for all this, cannot men find excuses for it? Yes; abundance, such as they are. "I would not do this," says one; "I would not sell uncustomed goods, but I am under a necessity; I cannot live without it." I answer, May not the man who stops you on the highway say the very same? "I would not take your purse, but I am under a necessity; I cannot live without

it." Suppose the case to be your own; and will you accept of this excuse? Would not you tell him, "Let the worst come to the worst, you had better be honest, though you should starve." But that need not be either. Others who had no more than you to begin with, yet find a way to live honestly; and certainly so may you: however, settle it in your heart, "Live or die, I will be an honest man."

2. "Nay," says another, "we do not wrong the king, for he loses nothing by us. Yea, on the contrary, the king is rather a gainer; namely, by the seizures that are made."

So you plunder the king out of stark love and kindness! You rob him to make him rich! It is true you take away his purse; but you put a heavier in its place! Are you serious? Do you mean what you say? Look me in the face and tell me so. You cannot. You know in your own conscience that what comes to the king out of all seizures made the year round does not amount to the tenth, no, not to the hundredth part of what he is defrauded of.

But if he really gained more than he lost that would not excuse you. You are not to commit robbery, though the person robbed were afterward to gain by it. You are not to "do evil, that good may come." If you do, your "damnation is just."

"But certainly," say some, "the king is a gainer by it, or he might easily suppress it." Will you tell him which way? by custom-house officers? But many of them have no desire to suppress it. They find their account in its continuance; they come in for a share of the plunder. But what if they had a desire to suppress it? They have not the power. Some of them have lately made the experiment, and what was the consequence? Why, they lost a great part of their bread, and were in danger of losing their lives.

Can the king suppress smuggling by parties of soldiers? That he cannot do. For all the soldiers he has are not enough to watch every port and every creek in Great Britain. Besides, the soldiers that are employed will do little more than the custom-house officers. For there are ways and means to take off their edge too, and making them as quiet as lambs.

"But many courtiers and great men, who know the king's mind, not only connive at smuggling, but practice it." And what can we infer from this? Only that those great men are great villains. They are great highwaymen and pickpockets, and their greatness does not excuse, but makes their crime tenfold more inexcusable.

But besides: Suppose the king were willing to be cheated, how would this excuse your cheating his subjects? all your fellow subjects, every honest man, and, in particular, every honest trader? How would it excuse your making it impossible for him to live, unless he will turn knave as well as yourself?

3. "Well, but I am not convinced it is a sin; my conscience does not condemn me for it." No! Are you not convinced that robbery is a sin? Then I am sorry for you. And does not your conscience condemn you for stealing? Then your conscience is asleep. I pray God to smite you to the heart, and awaken it this day!

4. "Nay, but my soul is quite happy in the love of God; therefore, I cannot think it is wrong." I answer, Wrong it must be, if the Bible is right. Therefore, either that love is a mere delusion, a fire of your own kindling, or God may have hitherto winked at the times of ignorance. But now you have the means of knowing better; now light is offered to you; and if you shut your eyes against the light, the love of God cannot possibly continue.

5. "But I only buy a little brandy or tea now and then, just for my own use." That is, I only steal a little. God says, "Steal not at all."

6. "Nay, I do not buy any at all myself; I only send my child or servant for it." You receive it of them, do you not? And the receiver is as bad as the thief.

7. "Why, I would not meddle with it, but I am forced by my parent, husband, or master." If you are forced by your father or mother to rob, you will be hanged nevertheless. This may lessen, but does not take away the fault; for you ought to suffer rather than sin.

8. "But I do not know that it was run." No! Did not he that sold it tell you it was? If he sold it under the common price, he did. The naming the price was telling you, "This is run."

9. "But I do not know where to get tea which is not run." I will tell you where to get it; you may have it from those whose tea is duly entered, and who make a conscience of it. But were it otherwise, if I could get no wine but what I knew to be stolen, I would drink water; yea, though not only my health but my life depended upon it; for it is better to die than to live by thieving.

10. "But if I could get what has paid duty, I am not able to pay the price of it, and I cannot live without it." I answer: (1) You can live without it as well as your grandmother did. But,

(2) If you could not live without it, you ought to die rather than steal; for death is a less evil than sin.

11. "But my husband will buy it, whether I do or no, and I must use what he provides or have none." Undoubtedly, to have none is a less evil than to be partaker with a thief.

IV. Upon the whole, then, I exhort all of you that fear God, and desire to save your souls without regarding what others do, resolve at all hazards to keep yourselves pure. Let your eye be fixed on the word of God, not the examples of men. Our Lord says to every one of you, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me!" Let no convenience, no gain, no pleasure, no friend, draw you from following him. In spite of all the persuasions, all the reasonings of men, keep to the word of God. If all on the right hand and the left will be knaves, be you an honest man. Probably God will repay you (he certainly will, if this be best for you), even with temporal blessings; there have not been wanting remarkable instances of this. But, if not, he will repay you with what is far better, with "the testimony of a good conscience toward God;" with "joy in the Holy Ghost;" with a "hope full of immortality;" with "the love of God shed abroad in your hearts;" and "the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!"

LONDON, *January 30, 1767.*

A WORD TO A CONDEMNED MALEFACTOR.

WHAT a condition are you in! The sentence is passed; you are condemned to die; and this sentence is to be executed shortly! You have no way to escape; these fetters, these walls, these gates and bars, these keepers, cut off all hope; therefore, die you must. But must you die like a beast, without thinking what it is to die? You need not; you will not; you will think a little first; you will consider, "What is death?" It is leaving this world, these houses, lands, and all things under the sun; leaving all these things, never to return; your place will know you no more. It is leaving these pleasures; for there is no eating, drinking, gaming, no merriment in the grave. It is leaving your acquaintances, companions, friends; your father, mother, wife, children. You cannot stay with them, nor can they go with you; you must part; perhaps forever. It is leaving a part of yourself; leaving this body which has accompanied you so long. Your soul must now

drop its old companion to rot and molder into dust. It must enter upon a new, strange, unbodied state. It must stand naked before God!

2. But O, how will you stand before God; the great, the holy, the just, the terrible God? Is it not his own word, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?" No man shall see him with joy; rather, he will call for the mountains to fall upon him, and the rocks to cover him. And what do you think holiness is? It is purity both of heart and life. It is the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as he also walked. It is the loving God with all our heart; the loving our neighbor, every man, as ourselves; and the doing to all men, in every point, as we would they should do unto us. The least part of holiness is to do good to all men, and to do no evil either in word or work. This is only the outside of it. But this is more than you have. You are far from it; far as darkness from light. You have not the mind that was in Christ: there was no pride, no malice in him; no hatred, no revenge, no furious anger, no foolish or worldly desire. You have not walked as Christ walked; no, rather as the devil would have walked, had he been in a body; the works of the devil you have done, not the works of God. You have not loved God with all your heart. You have not loved him at all. You have not thought about him. You hardly knew or cared whether there was any God in the world. You have not done to others as you would they should do to you; far, very far from it. Have you done all the good you could to all men? If so, you had never come to this place. You have done evil exceedingly; your sins against God and man are more than the hairs of your head. In-somuch that even the world cannot bear you; the world itself spews you out. Even the men that know not God declare you are not fit to live upon the earth.

3. O, repent, repent! Know yourself; see and feel what a sinner you are. Think of the innumerable sins you have committed, even from your youth up. How many wicked words have you spoken? How many wicked actions have you done? Think of your inward sins; your pride, malice, hatred, anger, revenge, lust! Think of your sinful nature, totally alienated from the life of God. How is your whole soul prone to evil, void of good, corrupt, full of all abominations! Feel that your carnal mind is enmity against God. Well may the wrath of God abide upon you. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; he hath said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It shall die eternally, shall

be "punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

4. How, then, can you escape the damnation of hell, the lake of fire burning with brimstone—"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?" You can never redeem your own soul. You cannot atone for the sins that are past. If you could leave off sin now, and live unblamable for the time to come, that would be no atonement for what is past. Nay, if you could live like an angel for a thousand years, that would not atone for one sin. But neither can you do this; you cannot leave off sin; it has the dominion over you. If all your past sins were now to be forgiven, you would immediately sin again; that is, unless your heart were cleansed; unless it were created anew. And who can do this? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Surely none but God. So you are utterly sinful, guilty, helpless! What can you do to be saved?

5. One thing is needful: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" Believe (not as the devils only, but) with that faith which is the gift of God, which is wrought in a poor, guilty, helpless sinner by the power of the Holy Ghost. See all thy sins on Jesus laid. God laid on him the iniquities of us all. He suffered once the just for the unjust. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for thy sins; he was bruised for thy iniquities. "Behold the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world!" taking away thy sins, even thine, and reconciling thee unto God the Father! "Look unto him, and be thou saved!" If thou look unto him by faith, if thou cleave to him with thy whole heart, if thou receive him both to atone, to teach, and to govern thee in all things, thou shalt be saved, thou art saved, both from the guilt, the punishment, and all the power of sin. Thou shalt have peace with God, and a peace in thy own soul, that passeth all understanding. Thy soul shall magnify the Lord, and thy spirit rejoice in God thy Saviour. The love of God shall be shed abroad in thy heart, enabling thee to trample sin under thy feet. And thou wilt then have a hope full of immortality. Thou wilt no longer be afraid to die, but rather long for the hour, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ.

6. This is the faith that worketh by love, the way that leadeth to the kingdom. Do you earnestly desire to walk therein? Then put away all hinderances. Beware of company; at the peril of your soul, keep from those who neither know nor seek God. Your

old acquaintance are no acquaintance for you, unless they too acquaint themselves with God. Let them laugh at you, or say you are running mad. It is enough if you have praise of God. Beware of strong drink. Touch it not, lest you should not know when to stop. You have no need of this to cheer your spirits; but of the peace and the love of God. Beware of men that pretend to show you the way to heaven, and know it not themselves. There is no other name whereby you can be saved but the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And there is no other way whereby you can find the virtue of his name but by faith. Beware of Satan transformed into an angel of light, and telling you it is presumption to believe in Christ as your Lord and your God, your wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Believe in him with your whole heart. Cast your whole soul upon his love. Trust him alone; love him alone; fear him alone; and cleave to him alone; till he shall say to you (as to the dying malefactor of old), "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

THOUGHTS ON A SINGLE LIFE.*

1. THE forbidding to marry, as it is well-known the Church of Rome does and has done for several ages (in which marriage is absolutely forbidden, not only to all religious orders, but to the whole body of clergy), is numbered by the great apostle among "the doctrines of devils." And among the same we need not scruple to number the despising or condemning marriage; as do many of those in the Romish Church who are usually termed mystic writers. One of these does not scruple to affirm, "Marriage is only licensed fornication." But the Holy Ghost says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled." Nor can it be doubted but persons may be as holy in a married as in a single state.

2. In the latter clause of the sentence the apostle seems to guard against a mistake into which some sincere Christians have fallen; particularly when they have just found such a liberty of spirit as they had not before experienced. They imagine a defilement where there is none, "and fear where no fear is." And

* In the year 1743 Mr. Wesley published a small pamphlet under the title of *Thoughts on Marriage and a Single Life*. It was afterward superseded by the tract now before the reader, which embodies the principal sentiments contained in the former publication.—EDITOR.

it is possible this very fear of sin may betray them into sin. For it may induce persons to defraud each other, forgetting the express determination of the apostle: "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife" (1 Cor. vii, 4).

3. And yet we must not forget what the apostle subjoins in the following verses: "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them, if they abide even as I. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned. Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh. But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit; and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" (verses 8, 27, 28, 32, 35).

4. But though "it is good for a man not to touch a woman" (verse 1), yet this is not a universal rule. "I would," indeed, says the apostle, "that all men were as myself" (verse 7). But that cannot be; for "every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, another after that." "If," then, "they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (verse 9). "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." Exactly agreeable to this are the words of our Lord. When the apostles said, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry; he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, who were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (Matt. xix, 10, 12).

5. But who is able to "receive this saying," to abstain from marriage, and yet not burn? It behooves every one here to judge for himself; none is called to judge for another. In general, I believe every man is able to receive it when he is first justified. I believe every one then receives this gift; but with most it does not continue long. Thus much is clear; it is a plain matter of

fact, which no man can deny. It is not so clear, whether God withdraws it of his own good pleasure or for any fault of ours. I incline to think it is not withdrawn without some fault on our part. But, be that as it may, I have now only to do with those who are still able to "receive this saying."

6. To this happy few I say: (1) Know the advantages you enjoy, many of which are pointed out by the apostle himself. You may be without carefulness. You are under no necessity of "caring for the things of the world." You have only to "care for the things of the Lord, how you may please the Lord." One care alone lies upon you, how you "may be holy both in body and spirit."

You may "attend upon the Lord without distraction;" while others, like Martha, are cumbered with much serving, and drawn hither and thither by many things, you may remain centered in God, sitting, like Mary, at the Master's feet, and listening to every word of his mouth.

You enjoy a blessed liberty from the "trouble in the flesh," which must more or less attend a married state, from a thousand nameless domestic trials which are found, sooner or later, in every family. You are exempt from numberless occasions of sorrow and anxiety with which heads of families are entangled, especially those who have sickly or weak or unhappy or disobedient children. If your servants are wicked, you may put them away, and your relation to them ceases. But what could you do with a wicked son or daughter? How could you dissolve that relation?

Above all, you are at liberty from the greatest of all entanglements, the loving one creature above all others. It is possible to do this without sin, without any impeachment of our love to God. But how inconceivably difficult! to give God our whole heart while a creature has so large a share of it! How much more easily may we do this when the heart is tenderly, indeed, but equally attached to more than one; or, at least, without any great inequality! What angelic wisdom does it require to give enough of our affection, and not too much, to so near a relation!

And how much easier is it (just to touch on one point more) wholly to conquer our natural desires than to gratify them exactly so far as Christian temperance allows! just so far as every pleasure of sense prepares us for taking pleasure in God.

7. You have leisure to improve yourself in every kind, to wait upon God in public and private, and to do good to your neighbor

in various ways, as Christian prudence shall suggest; whereas those who are married are necessarily taken up with the things of the world. You may give all your time to God without interruption, and need ask leave of none but yourself so to do. You may employ every hour in what you judge to be the most excellent way. But if you was married you may ask leave of your companion; otherwise, what complaints or disgust would follow! And how hard is it even to know (how much more to act suitably to that knowledge) how far you ought to give way, for peace' sake, and where to stop! What wisdom is requisite in order to know how far you can recede from what is most excellent, particularly with regard to conversation that is not "to the use of edifying," in order to please your good-natured or ill-natured partner, without displeasing God!

8. You may give all your worldly substance to God; nothing need hinder. You have no increasing family, you have no wife or children to provide for, which might occasion a thousand doubts (without any extraordinary measure of divine light) whether you had done either too much or too little for them. You may "make yourself friends of" all "the mammon of unrighteousness" which God intrusts you with; having none that has any right to complain or to charge you with unkindness for so doing. You may lay out all your talents of every kind entirely for the glory of God; as you have none else to please, none to regard, but Him that lived and died for you.

9. I say, secondly, prize the advantages you enjoy; know the value of them. Esteem them as highly while you have them, as others do after they have lost them. Pray constantly and fervently for this very thing, that God would teach you to set a due value upon them. And let it be matter of daily thanksgiving to God that he has made you a partaker of these benefits. Indeed, the more full and explicit you are herein, the more sensible you will be of the cause you have to be thankful; the more lively conviction you will have of the greatness of the blessing.

10. If you know and duly prize the advantages you enjoy, then (3) be careful to keep them. But this (as easy as it may seem) it is impossible you should do by your own strength, so various, so frequent, and so strong are the temptations which you will meet with to cast them away. Not only the children of the world, but the children of God, will undoubtedly tempt you thereto; and that partly by the most plausible reasons, partly by the most artful persuasions. Meantime, the old deceiver will

not be wanting to give an edge to all those reasons and persuasions, and to recall the temptation again and again, and press it close upon your heart. You have need, therefore, to use every help ; and the first of these is earnest prayer. Let no day pass without this, without praying for this very thing—that God would work what with men is impossible ; that he would vouchsafe to preserve his own gift ; and that you may not suffer any loss this day, either by the subtlety or power of devils or men, or the deceitfulness of your own heart.

11. A second help may be the conversing frequently and freely with those of your own sex who are like minded. It may be of infinite service to disclose to these the very secrets of your hearts ; especially the weaknesses springing from your natural constitution or education or long contracted habit, and the temptations which from time to time most easily beset you. Advise with them on every circumstance that occurs ; open your heart without reserve. By this means a thousand devices of Satan will be brought to nought ; innumerable snares will be prevented ; or you will pass through them without being hurt. Yea, and if at some time you have suffered a little, the wound will speedily be healed.

12. I say *of your own sex* ; for, in the third place, it will be highly expedient to avoid all needless conversation, much more all intimacy, with those of the other sex ; so expedient that, unless you observe this, you will surely cast away the gift of God. Say not, “ But they have much grace and much understanding.” So much the greater is the danger. There would be less fear of your receiving hurt from them if they had less grace or less understanding. And whenever any of these are thrown in your way, “ make a covenant with your eyes,” your ears, your hands, that you do not indulge yourself in any that are called innocent freedoms. Above all, “ keep your heart with all diligence.” Check the first risings of desire. Watch against every sally of imagination, particularly if it be pleasing. If it is darted in, whether you will or no, yet let no “ vain thought lodge within you.” Cry out, “ My God and my all, I am thine, thine alone ! I will be thine forever ! O, save me from setting up an idol in my heart ! Save me from taking any step toward it. Still bring my ‘ every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.’ ”

13. “ But how shall I attain to, or how preserve this strength and firmness of spirit ? ” In order to this I advise you, fourthly (need I say to avoid the sin of Onan, seeing Satan will

not cast out Satan? or rather), avoid, with the utmost care, all softness and effeminacy; remembering the express denunciation of an inspired writer, *οι μαλακοι*, the *soft*, or *effeminate*, whether poor or rich (the apostle does not make any difference on that account), “shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Avoid all delicacy, first in spirit, then in apparel, food, lodging, and a thousand nameless things; and this the more speedily and the more resolutely if you have been long accustomed thereto. Avoid all needless self-indulgence, as well as delicacy and softness. All these tend to breed and cherish those appetites and passions which you have renounced for Christ’s sake. They either create or increase those desires which, “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake,” you are determined not to gratify. Avoid all sloth, inactivity, indolence. Sleep no more than nature requires. Be never idle; and use as much bodily exercise as your strength will allow. I dare not add Monsieur Pascal’s rule—avoid all pleasure. It is not possible to avoid all pleasure, even of sense, without destroying the body. Neither doth God require it at our hands; it is not his will concerning us. On the contrary, he “giveth us all things to enjoy,” so we enjoy them to his glory. But I say, avoid all that pleasure which any way hinders you from enjoying him; yea, all such pleasure as does not prepare you for taking pleasure in God. Add to this constant and continued course of universal self-denial, the taking up of your cross daily, the enduring “hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Remember, “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.” This is the way; walk therein; think not of a smoother path. Add to your other exercises constant and prudent fasting, and the Lord will uphold you with his hand.

14. I advise you, lastly, if you desire to keep them, use all the advantages you enjoy. Indeed, without this it is utterly impossible to keep them; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken the word which cannot be broken, which must be fulfilled with regard to all the good gifts of God: “To him that hath,” uses what he hath, “shall be given; and he shall have more abundantly: but from him that hath not,” uses it not, “shall be taken even that which he hath.” Would you, therefore, retain what you now have, what God hath already given? If so, “giving all diligence,” use it to the uttermost. “Stand fast in” every instance of “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.” Be not “entangled” again in the “cares of this life;” but “cast all your care on Him that careth for you. Be careful for nothing, but

in every thing make your requests known unto God with thanksgiving."

See that you "wait upon the Lord without distraction;" let nothing move you from your center. "One thing is needful"—to see, love, follow Christ, in every thought, word, and work.

Flee the "sorrow of this world;" it "worketh death." Let not your heart be troubled. In all circumstances let your soul magnify the Lord, and your spirit rejoice in God your Saviour. Preserve a constant serenity of mind and even cheerfulness of spirit.

Keep at the utmost distance from foolish desires, from desiring any happiness but in God. Still let all your "desire be to him, and to the remembrance of his name."

Make full use of all the leisure you have; never be unemployed, never triflingly employed; let every hour turn to some good account. Let not a scrap of time be squandered away; "gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." Give all your time to God; lay out the whole as you judge will be most to his glory. In particular see that you waste no part of it in unprofitable conversation; but let all your discourse "be seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers."

Give all your money to God. You have no pretense for laying up treasures upon earth. While you "gain all you can," and "save all you can," "give all you can"—that is, all you have.

Lay out all your talents of every kind in doing all good to all men; knowing that "every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor."

15. Upon the whole, without disputing whether the married or single life be the more perfect state (an idle dispute, since perfection does not consist in any outward state whatever, but in an absolute devotion of all our heart and all our life to God), we may safely say, Blessed are "they who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake;" who abstain from things lawful in themselves in order to be more devoted to God. Let these never forget those remarkable words: "Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you" (a preface denoting both the certainty and importance of what is spoken), "There is no man that hath left" (either by giving up or by not accepting them) "house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark x, 28-30).

A THOUGHT UPON MARRIAGE.

If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

1. I AM not now about to speak to men of the world, or to them that have only the form of religion, but to you who have experienced, if you do not now, the "faith which worketh by love;" and, in speaking to you, I do not peremptorily assert any thing. I barely propose a thought that rises in my mind, and beg you to consider it.

2. You have some thoughts of altering your condition; and we know "marriage is honorable in all men." But is your eye single herein? This is worthy your most serious consideration. Retire a little into yourself, and ask your own heart, "What is it moves me to think of this?"

3. I will tell you how it was with me; though I do not know I was ever low spirited (my spirits being always the same, whether in sickness or in health), yet I was often uneasy. Even in vigorous health, in plenty, and in the midst of my friends I wanted something; I was not satisfied. I looked about for happiness, but could not find it. Then I thought, "O, if I had but such a person with me, I should surely be happy." I mused with myself, "How lovely is her look! How agreeable she talks!" I thought of Sappho's words:

"Bless'd as the immortal gods is he,
The youth that fondly sits by thee;
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak and sweetly smile."

"Surely this is the very thing I want; and could I attain it, I should then no more be solitary! For—

Thou from all shades the darkness would exclude,
And from a desert banish solitude:

Therefore, with her I can be happy; without her I never can."

4. Perhaps your case is something like mine. Let me, then, ask you a few questions.

Were you ever convinced of sin? of your lost, undone state? Did you feel the wrath of God abiding on you? If so, what did you then want to make you happy? "To know my God is reconciled." You had your wish. You were enabled to say, boldly, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." And were not you then happy? "Indeed I was." In what? "In the knowledge and love of God."

5. And if you have now the same knowledge and love of God, does it not answer the same end? Will not the same cause still produce the same effect? If, therefore, you are not happy now, is it not because you have not that intercourse with God which you then had? And are you seeking to supply the want of that intercourse by the enjoyment of a creature? You imagine that near connection with a woman will make amends for distance from God! Have you so learned Christ? Has your experience taught you no better than this?

6. You were happy once; you knew you were; happy in God, without being beholden to any creature. You did not need

Love's all-sufficient sea to raise
With drops of creature happiness.

And is it wise to seek it now anywhere else than where you found it before? You have not the same excuse with those who never were happy in God. And how little is the seeking it in any creature better than idolatry! Is it not, in effect, loving the creature more than the Creator? Does it not imply that you are "a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God?"

7. O, return to Him that made you happy before, and he will make you happy again. Repeat your prayer,

"Keep me dead to all below;
Only Christ resolved to know:
Firm and disengaged and free;
Seeking all my bliss in thee!"

Seek, accept of nothing in the room of God. Let all the springs of your happiness be in him. "Seek first," just as you did before, "the kingdom of God and his righteousness;" the knowledge and love of God; "fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ;" "and all other things shall be added unto you;" particularly joy in the Holy Ghost. Again,

Know God, and teach thy soul to know
The joys that from religion flow:
Then every grace shall be thy guest,
And peace be there to crown the rest.

JOHN WESLEY.

CONCERNING DRESS.

I. 1. I AM not fond of saying the same thing over and over; especially when I have so many things to say that the day of life (which with me is far spent) is not likely to suffice for them. But in some cases it is needful for you that I should; and then it is not grievous to me. And it may be best to speak freely and fully at once, that there may be the less need of speaking on this head hereafter.

2. When we look into the Bible with any attention, and then look round into the world, to see who believes and who lives according to this book, we may easily discern that the system of practice, as well as the system of truth, there delivered is torn in pieces and scattered abroad like the members of Absyrtus. Every denomination of Christians retains some part either of Christian truth or practice; these hold fast one part, and those another, as their fathers did before them. What is the duty, meantime, of those who desire to follow the whole word of God? Undoubtedly to "gather up" all these "fragments," that, if possible, "nothing be lost;" with all diligence to follow all those we see about us, so far as they follow the Bible; and to join together in one scheme of truth and practice what almost all the world put asunder.

3. Many years ago I observed several parts of Christian practice among the people called Quakers. Two things I particularly remarked among them—plainness of speech and plainness of dress. I willingly adopted both, with some restrictions, and particularly plainness of dress; the same I recommended to you, when God first called you out of the world; and after the addition of more than twenty years' experience I recommend it to you still.

4. But before I go any farther I must entreat you, in the name of God, be open to conviction. Whatever prejudices you have contracted from education, custom, or example divest yourselves of them as far as possible. Be willing to receive light either from God or man; do not shut your eyes against it. Rather, be glad to see more than you did before; to "have the eyes of your understanding opened." Receive the truth in the love thereof, and you will have reason to bless God forever.

II. 1. Not that I would advise you to imitate the people called Quakers in those little particularities of dress which can answer no possible end but to distinguish them from all other people. To

be singular merely for singularity's sake is not the part of a Christian ; I do not, therefore, advise you to wear a hat of such dimensions, or a coat of a particular form. Rather, in things that are absolutely indifferent, that are of no consequence at all, humility and courtesy require you to conform to the customs of your country.

2. But I advise you to imitate them, first, in the neatness of their apparel. This is highly to be commended, and quite suitable to your Christian calling. Let all your apparel, therefore, be as clean as your situation in life will allow. It is certain the poor cannot be as clean as they would, as having little change of raiment. But let even these be as clean as they can, as care and diligence can keep them. Indeed, they have particular need so to be, because cleanliness is one great branch of frugality. It is likewise more conducive to health than is generally considered. Let the poor, then, especially labor to be clean, and provoke those of higher rank to jealousy.

3. I advise you to imitate them, secondly, in the plainness of their apparel. In this are implied two things : (1) That your apparel be cheap, not expensive ; far cheaper than others in your circumstances wear, or than you would wear if you knew not God. (2) That it be grave, not gay, airy, or showy ; not in the point of the fashion. And these easy rules may be applied both to the materials whereof it is made and the manner wherein it is made or put on.

4. Would you have a farther rule with respect to both ? Then take one which you may always carry in your bosom : " Do every thing herein with a single eye ; " and this will direct you in every circumstance. Let a single intention to please God prescribe both what clothing you shall buy and the manner wherein it shall be made, and how you shall put it on and wear it. To express the same thing in other words : let all you do, in this respect, be so done that you may offer it to God, a sacrifice acceptable through Christ Jesus ; so that, consequently, it may increase your reward and brighten your crown in heaven. And so it will do if it be agreeable to Christian humility, seriousness, and charity.

5. Shall I be more particular still ? Then I " exhort all those who desire me to watch over their souls," Wear no gold (whatever officers of State may do, or magistrates, as the ensign of their office), no pearls, or precious stones ; use no curling of hair, or costly apparel, how grave soever. I advise those who are able to receive this saying, Buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen, no

superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing, though you have it already, which is of a glaring color, or which is in any kind gay, glittering, or showy ; nothing made in the very height of the fashion, nothing apt to attract the eyes of the by-standers. I do not advise women to wear rings, earrings, necklaces, lace (of whatever kind or color), or ruffles, which, by little and little, may easily shoot out from one to twelve inches deep. Neither do I advise men to wear colored waistcoats, shining stockings, glittering or costly buckles or buttons, either on their coats or in their sleeves, any more than gay, fashionable, or expensive perukes. It is true these are little, very little things, which are not worth defending ; therefore, give them up, let them drop, throw them away without another word ; else a little needle may cause much pain in your flesh, a little self-indulgence much hurt to your soul.

III. 1. For the preceding exhortation I have the authority of God in clear and express terms : “ I will that women ” (and, by parity of reason, men too) “ adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety ; not with braided ” (curled) “ hair, or gold, or pearls ” (one kind of precious stones which was then most in use put for all), “ or costly array ; but ” (which becometh women professing godliness) “ with good works ” (1 Tim. ii, 9, 10). Again : “ Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting ” (curling) “ the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel ; but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price ” (1 Pet. iii, 3, 4). Nothing can be more express ; the wearing of gold, of precious stones, and of costly apparel, together with curling of hair, is here forbidden by name ; nor is there any restriction made either here or in any other Scripture. Whoever, therefore, says, “ There is no harm in these things,” may as well say, “ There is no harm in stealing or adultery.”

2. There is something peculiarly observable in the manner wherein both St. Peter and St. Paul speak of these things. “ Let not your adorning,” says St. Peter, “ be that outward adorning ; but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” The latter clause is not added barely to fill up the sentence, but with strong and weighty reason. For there is a direct contrariety (as little as we may suspect it) between that outward and this inward adorning ; and that both with regard to their source and with regard to their tendency. As to their source, all that adorning springs from nature ; a meek and quiet spirit, from grace ; the

former, from conforming to our own will and the will of man; the latter, from conformity to the will of God. And as to their tendency, nothing more directly tends to destroy meekness and quietness of spirit than all that outward adorning whereby we seek to commend ourselves to men and not to God; for this cherishes all those passions and tempers which overthrow the quiet of every soul wherein they dwell.

3. Let "them adorn themselves," saith St. Paul, "not with curling of hair, or with gold, or pearls, or costly array; but" (which becometh women professing godliness) "with good works." The latter clause is here likewise added for plain and weighty reasons. For, (1) That kind of adorning cannot spring from godliness; from either the love or fear of God, from a desire of conforming to his will, or from the mind which was in Christ Jesus. (2) It no way tends to increase godliness; it is not conducive to any holy temper. But, (3) It manifestly tends to destroy several of the tempers most essential to godliness. It has no friendly influence on humility; whether we aim at pleasing others or ourselves hereby. Either in one case or the other it will rather increase pride or vanity than lowliness of heart. It does not all minister to the seriousness which becomes a sinner born to die.

It is utterly inconsistent with simplicity; no one uses it merely to please God. Whoever acts with a single eye, does all things to be seen and approved of God, and can no more dress than he can pray or give alms "to be seen of men."

4. "O, but one may be as humble in velvet and embroidery as another is in sackcloth." True; for a person may wear sackcloth and have no humility at all. The heart may be filled with pride and vanity whatever the raiment be. Again: Women under the yoke of unbelieving parents or husbands, as well as men in office, may, on several occasions, be constrained to put on gold or costly apparel; and in cases of this kind plain experience shows that the baleful influence of it is suspended. So that wherever it is not our choice, but our cross, it may consist with godliness, with a meek and quiet spirit, with lowliness of heart, with Christian seriousness. But it is not true that any one can choose this from a single eye to please God; or, consequently, without sustaining great loss as to lowliness and every other Christian temper.

5. But, however this be, can you be adorned at the same time with costly apparel and with good works; that is, in the same degree as you might have been had you bestowed less cost on

your apparel? You know this is impossible; the more you expend on the one, the less you have to expend on the other. Costliness of apparel, in every branch, is therefore immediately, directly, inevitably destructive of good works. You see a brother, for whom Christ died, ready to perish for want of needful clothing. You would give it him gladly; but, alas! "it is corban, whereby he might have been profited." It is given already, not indeed for the service of God, not to the treasury of the temple, but either to please the folly of others or to feed vanity or the lust of the eye in yourself. Now (even suppose these were harmless tempers, yet) what an unspeakable loss is this, if it be really true, that "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor!" if there be indeed a reward in heaven for every work of faith, for every degree of the labor of love!

IV. 1. As to the advice subjoined, it is easy to observe that all those smaller things are, in their degree, liable to the same objections as the greater. If they are gay, showy, pleasing to the eye, the putting them on does not spring from a single view to please God. It neither flows from nor tends to advance a meek and quiet spirit. It does not arise from nor any way promote real vital godliness.

2. And if they are in any wise costly, if they are purchased with any unnecessary expense, they cannot but, in proportion to that expense, be destructive of good works. Of consequence they are destructive of that charity which is fed thereby; hardening our heart against the cry of the poor and needy by inuring us to shut up our bowels of compassion toward them.

3. At least, all unnecessary expenses of this kind, whether small or great, are senseless and foolish. This we may defy any man living to get over, if he allows there is another world. For there is no reward in heaven for laying out your money in ornaments or costly apparel; whereas you may have an eternal reward for whatever you expend on earth.

4. Consider this more closely: here are two ways proposed of laying out such a sum of money. I may lay it out in expensive apparel for myself or in necessary clothing for my neighbor. The former will please my own eye or that of others, the latter will please God. Now, suppose there were no more harm in one than in the other; in that which pleases man than in that which pleases God; is there as much good in it? If they were equally innocent, are they equally wise? By the one I gratify the desire of the eye, and gain a pleasure that perishes in the using; by the other

I gain a larger share of those pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore. By the former I obtain the applause of men; by the latter, the praise of God. In this way I meet with the admiration of fools; in that, I hear from the Judge of all, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

5. Brethren, whatever ye are accounted by men I would not have you fools in God's account. "Walk ye circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise;" not in those ways which God may possibly forgive (to put things in the most favorable light), but in those which he will certainly reward. "In wickedness be ye children" still; "but in understanding be ye men." I want to see a visible body of people who are standing examples of this wisdom; patterns of doing all things, great and small, with an eye to God and eternity.

V. 1. But we may be assured the wisdom of the world will find out abundance of objections to this. Accordingly, it is objected, first, "If God has given us plentiful fortunes, if we are placed in the higher ranks of life, we must act suitably to our fortune. We ought to dress according to our rank; that is, in gold and costly apparel." Not to insist that none of you are of this rank, I answer, Where is this written? Our Saviour once occasionally said, "Behold, they who wear gorgeous" (splendid) "apparel, are in kings' courts;" but he does not say they ought to be even there; he neither enjoins nor countenances it. And where is this either enjoined or allowed by him or any of his apostles? Bring me plain, scriptural proof for your assertion, or I cannot allow it.

2. "But did not God give express command by Moses that some even among his chosen people should be adorned in the most exquisite manner with gold and precious stones and costly array?" Indeed he did; he expressly commanded this with regard to Aaron and his successors in the high priesthood. But to this I answer: First, this direction which God gave with regard to the Jewish high-priest can certainly affect no person in England, unless the Archbishop of Canterbury; and I apprehend he does not plead the precedent. Secondly, the Jews and we are under different dispensations. The glory of the whole Mosaic dispensation was chiefly visible and external; whereas the glory of the Christian dispensation is of an invisible and spiritual nature.

3. "But what, then, are gold and precious stones for? Why have they a place in the creation?" What if I say I cannot tell?

There are abundance of things in the creation which I do not know the use of. What are crocodiles, lions, tigers, scorpions for? Why have so many poisons a place in the creation? Some of them are for medicine; but whatever they are for, in whatever manner they may be useful, they are certainly not to be used in such a manner as God has expressly forbidden.

4. "But if they were not thus adorned kings and generals would be despised by their subjects and soldiers." Supposing they would, that is nothing to you; for you are neither kings nor generals. But it is absolutely certain they would not if they were not despised on other accounts. If they are valiant and wise they will never be despised for the plainness of their dress. Was ever general or king more esteemed or beloved by his subjects and soldiers than King Charles of Sweden? And it is sure he wore no gold or costly apparel, not so much as a common officer. But we need not go so many years back. Who is the prince that is now honored and beloved, both by his subjects and soldiers, far beyond any other king or general in Europe? There is no need to repeat his name. But does he gain this honor and love by the costliness of his apparel? So far from it that he rarely uses any other dress than the uniform of his own guards.

5. "But if all men were to dress like him, how would tradesmen live?" I answer: (1) God certainly considered this before ever he gave these commands. And he would never have given them had he not seen that, if they were universally observed, men in general would live better than they otherwise could; better in this world as well as that to come. But, (2) There is no danger at all that they should be universally observed. Only a little flock in any civilized nation will observe them till the knowledge of God covers the earth. (3) If those who do observe them employ the money they thus save in the most excellent manner, then a part of what before only served to fat a few rich tradesmen for hell will suffice to feed and clothe and employ many poor that seek the kingdom of heaven. (4) And how will those tradesmen themselves live? They will live like men, by honest labor; most of whom before lived like swine, wallowing in all gluttony and sensuality. But, (5) This is all mere trifling. It is only a copy of your countenance; for it is not this, it is not a regard to trade or the good of the nation that makes you disobey God. No; it is pride, vanity, or some other sinful temper which is the real cause of these sinful actions.

6. "But we cannot carry on our own trade without dressing

like other people." If you mean only conforming to those customs of your country that are neither gay nor costly, why should you not dress like other people? I really think you should. Let an Englishman dress like other Englishmen, not like a Turk or a Tartar. Let an English woman dress like other English women, not like a French woman or a German. But if you mean conformity to them in what God has forbidden, the answer is ready at hand: If you cannot carry on your trade without breaking God's command you must not carry it on. But I doubt the fact; I know no trade which may not be carried on by one who uses plain and modest apparel. I fear, therefore, this too is but a copy of your countenance; you love these things, and therefore think them necessary. Your heart carries away your judgment; if you were not fond of them you would never dream of their necessity.

7. In one single case these things may be necessary—that is, unavoidable—namely, that of women who are under the yoke of self-willed, unreasonable husbands or parents. Such may be constrained to do in some degree what otherwise they would not. And they are blameless herein if, (1) They use all possible means, arguments, entreaties to be excused from it; and, when they cannot prevail, (2) do it just so far as they are constrained, and no farther.

VI. 1. And now, brethren, what remains but that I beseech you who are not under the yoke, who are, under God, the directors of your own actions, to set prejudice, obstinacy, fashion aside, and to yield to Scripture, to reason, to truth. Suppose, as some affirm, you acted on no higher motive than to please me herein, I know not that you would have need to be ashamed; even this you might avow in the face of the sun. You owe something to me; perhaps it is not my fault if you owe not your own souls also. If, then, you did an indifferent thing only on this principle, not to give me any uneasiness, but to oblige, to comfort me in my labor, would you do much amiss? How much more may you be excused in doing what I advise when truth, reason, and Scripture advise the same, when the thing in question is not an indifferent thing, but clearly determined by God himself?

2. Some years ago, when I first landed at Savannah, in Georgia, a gentlewoman told me, "I assure you, sir, you will see as well-dressed a congregation on Sunday as most you have seen in London." I did so; and soon after took occasion to expound those Scriptures which relate to dress, and to press them freely upon my audience in a plain and close application. All the time

that I afterward ministered at Savannah I saw neither gold in the church nor costly apparel, but the congregation in general was almost constantly clothed in plain, clean linen or woolen.

3. And why should not my advice, grounded on Scripture and reason, weigh with you as much as with them? I will tell you why: (1) You are surrounded with saints of the world, persons fashionably, reputably religious. And these are constant opposers of all who would go farther in religion than themselves. These are continually warning you against running into extremes, and striving to beguile you from the simplicity of the Gospel. (2) You have near you still more dangerous enemies than these—Antinomians, whether German or English, who, when any Christian practice is enforced, come in with the cuckoo's note, "The law, the law!" and, while they themselves glory in their shame, make you ashamed of what should be your glory. (3) You have suffered by false teachers of our own, who undermined the doctrine you had received; negatively, in public, by not insisting upon it, by not exhorting you to dress as persons professing godliness (and not to speak for a Christian duty is, in effect, to speak against it); and positively, in private, either by jesting upon your exactness in observing the Scripture rule, or by insinuations which, if you did not mind them then, yet would afterward weaken your soul.

4. You have been, and are at this day, "in perils among false brethren." I mean not only those of other congregations who count strictness all one with bondage, but many of our own; in particular those who were once clearly convinced of the truth; but they have sinned away the conviction themselves, and now endeavor to harden others against it, at least by example; by returning again to the folly from which they were once clean escaped. But what is the example of all mankind when it runs counter to Scripture and reason? I have warned you a thousand times not to regard any example which contradicts reason or Scripture. If it ever should be (pray that it may not be, but if ever it should) that I or my brother, my wife or his, or all of us together should set an example contrary to Scripture and reason, I entreat you regard it not at all; still let Scripture and reason prevail.

5. You who have passed the morning, perhaps the noon of life, who find the shadows of the evening approach, set a better example to those that are to come, to the now rising generation. With you the day of life is far spent; the night of death is at

hand. You have no time to lose; see that you redeem every moment that remains. Remove every thing out of the way, be it ever so small (though, indeed, gay or costly apparel is not so), that might any ways obstruct your lowliness and meekness, your seriousness of spirit, your single intention to glorify God in all your thoughts and words and actions. Let no needless expense hinder your being, in the highest degree you possibly can, "rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," till you are clothed with glory and immortality.

Our carcasses will soon fall into the dust; then let the survivors adorn them with flowers. Meantime, let us regard those ornaments only that will accompany us into eternity.

6. You that are in the morning of your days, either your form is agreeable or it is not. If it is not, do not make your person remarkable; rather let it lie hid in common apparel. On every account it is your wisdom to recommend yourself to the eye of the mind, but especially to the eye of God, who reads the secrets of your hearts, and in whose sight the incorruptible ornaments alone are of great price. But if you would recommend yourself by dress, is any thing comparable to plain neatness? What kind of persons are those to whom you could be recommended by gay or costly apparel? None that are any way likely to make you happy; this pleases only the silliest and worst of men. At most it gratifies only the silliest and worst principle in those who are of a nobler character.

7. To you, whom God has intrusted with a more pleasing form, those ornaments are quite needless:

The' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barbarous skill;
'Tis like the poisoning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.

That is, to express ourselves in plain English, without any figure of poetry, it only tends to drag them into death everlasting who were going fast enough before, by additional provocations to lust, or at least inordinate affection. Did you actually design to raise either of these in those who looked upon you? What! while you and they were in the more immediate presence of God? What profaneness and inhumanity mixed together! But if you designed it not, did you foresee it? You might have done so without any extraordinary sagacity. "Nay, I did not care or think about it." And do you say this by way of excuse? You

“scatter abroad arrows, fire-brands, and death,” and do not care or think about it !

8. O, let us walk more charitably and more wisely for the time to come ! Let us all cast aside from this very hour whatever does not become men and women professing godliness ; whatever does not spring from the love and fear of God, and minister thereto. Let our seriousness “shine before men,” not our dress. Let all who see us know that we are not of this world. Let our adorning be that which fadeth not away ; even righteousness and true holiness. If ye regard not weakening my hands and grieving my spirit, yet grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Do you ask, “But what shall I do with the gay or costly apparel, and with the ornaments I have already ? Must I suffer them to be lost ? Ought I not to wear them now I have them ?” I answer : There is no loss like that of using them ; wearing them is the greatest loss of all. But what, then, shalt thou do with them ? Burn them rather than wear them ; throw them into the depth of the sea. Or, if thou canst with a clear conscience, sell them and give the money to them that want ; but buy no more at the peril of thy soul. Now, be a faithful steward ; after providing for those of thine own household things needful for life and godliness, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the sick, the prisoner, the stranger, with all that thou hast ; then shall God clothe thee with glory and honor in the presence of men and angels ; and thou shalt “shine as the brightness of the firmament,” yea, “as the stars for ever and ever.”

DECENTLY CLOTHED.

LOUD complaint has been made concerning a passage taken out of a little tract entitled *The Refined Courtier*, which is inserted in the last April *Magazine*, p. 197.* The passage objected to runs thus : “Let every one, when he appears in public, be decently clothed, according to his age and the custom of the place where he lives.” There is no fault in this. It is exactly right. Accordingly, when I appear in public I am decently appareled, according to my age and the custom of England ; sometimes in a short coat, sometimes in a night-gown, sometimes in a gown and cassock. “He that does otherwise seems to affect singularity.”

*The *Arminian Magazine* for 1788.—EDITOR.

And though a Christian frequently may, yea, must, be singular, yet he never affects singularity; he only takes up his cross so far as conscience requires. Thus far, then, there is nothing which is not capable of a fair construction. "Nor is it sufficient that our garment be made of good cloth" (the author speaks all along of people of rank, particularly those that attend the court), "but we should constrain ourselves to follow the garb where we reside," suppose at St. James's: "Seeing custom is the law and standard of decency in all things of this nature." It certainly is; and I advise all the king's lords of the bed-chamber, the queen's maids of honor to follow it. All this, therefore, may bear a sound construction; nor does it contradict any thing which I have said or written.

JOHN WESLEY.

INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THERE are four grand and powerful arguments which strongly induce us to believe that the Bible must be from God, namely, miracles, prophecies, the goodness of the doctrine, and the moral character of the penmen. All the miracles flow from divine power, all the prophecies from divine understanding, the goodness of the doctrine from divine goodness, and the moral character of the penmen from divine holiness.

Thus Christianity is built upon four grand pillars, namely, the power, understanding, goodness, and holiness of God. Divine power is the source of all the miracles; divine understanding, of all the prophecies; divine goodness, of the goodness of the doctrine; and divine holiness, of the moral character of the penmen.

I beg leave to propose a short, clear, and strong argument to prove the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

The Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men or devils, or of God.

1. It could not be the invention of good men or angels, for they neither would nor could make a book and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," when it was their own invention.

2. It could not be the invention of bad men or devils, for they would not make a book which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and condemns their souls to hell to all eternity.

3. Therefore, I draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by divine inspiration.

THE REAL CHARACTER OF MONTANUS.

THERE is great variety of opinions, says a late eminent historian, about the time when Montanus first appeared to work signs and miracles ; either by the operation of God, as the historian supposes, or by that of the devil transformed ; and that in such a manner as nobody was able to discern, because both his life and doctrine were holy and blameless. The time when it began to be doubted, concerning the spirit which operated in him and moved him after an extraordinary manner, whether it were a good or an evil one, is very uncertain ; but it seems to be between the years of Christ 150 and 170. However, so it was, that the sentiments of those sound in the faith, or the Christians in general, were much divided in their judgments. Of all the ancients, none was more express than he in the mystery of the incarnation, or seemed more to honor the person of Christ and extol his merits. All the ancient heretics erred greatly from the truth as to this ; but he was clear in this respect, preaching up repentance and faith in the name of the Lord Jesus alone, as the one mediator between God and man. Neither is it denied that he was orthodox in the notion of the Church as to Christian fellowship, rightly formed, according to the pattern delivered by Christ himself, and knit together by the bond of the Spirit, under pastors and officers of several orders, having a clear and certain mission from him whom they represent ; but he, under the character of a prophet, as an order established in the Church, appeared (without bringing any new doctrine) for reviving what was decayed and reforming what might be amiss ; whereas others that had been judged heretics were not only preachers of strange and monstrous opinions, but were utter enemies to all manner of discipline in the Church.

It seems, therefore, by the best information we can procure at this distance of time, that Montanus was not only a truly good man, but one of the best men upon earth ; and that his real crime was the severely reproving those who professed themselves Christians, while they neither had the mind that was in Christ nor walked as Christ walked ; but were conformable both in their temper and practice to the present evil world.

LETTER ON PREACHING CHRIST.

LONDON, December 20, 1751.

MY DEAR FRIEND: The point you speak of in your letter of September 21 is of a very important nature. I have had many serious thoughts concerning it, particularly for some months last past; therefore, I was not willing to speak hastily or slightly of it, but rather delayed till I could consider it thoroughly.

I mean by *preaching the Gospel*, preaching the love of God to sinners, preaching the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, with all the blessings which, in consequence thereof, are freely given to true believers.

By *preaching the law* I mean explaining and enforcing the commands of Christ, briefly comprised in the Sermon on the Mount.

Now, it is certain preaching the Gospel to penitent sinners "begets faith;" that it "sustains and increases spiritual life in true believers."

Now, sometimes it "teaches and guides" them that believe; yea, and "convinces them that believe not."

So far all are agreed. But what is the stated means of feeding and comforting believers? What is the means, as of begetting spiritual life where it is not, so of sustaining and increasing it where it is?

Here they divide. Some think preaching the law only; others, preaching the Gospel only. I think neither the one nor the other, but duly mixing both in every place, if not in every sermon.

I think the right method of preaching is this: at our first beginning to preach at any place, after a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and his willingness that they should be saved, to preach the law in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible; only intermixing the Gospel here and there, and showing it, as it were, afar off.

After more and more persons are convinced of sin we may mix more and more of the Gospel, in order to "beget faith," to raise into spiritual life those whom the law hath slain; but this not to be done too hastily neither. Therefore, it is not expedient wholly to omit the law; not only because we may well suppose that many of our hearers are still unconvinced, but because otherwise there is danger that many who are convinced will heal their own wounds slightly; therefore, it is only in private converse with a thoroughly convinced sinner that we should preach nothing but the Gospel.

If, indeed, we could suppose a whole congregation to be thus convinced, we should need to preach only the Gospel; and the same we might do if our whole congregation were supposed to be newly justified. But when these grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ a wise builder would preach the law to them again, only taking particular care to place every part of it in a gospel light, as not only a command, but a privilege also, as a branch of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He would take equal care to remind them that this is not the cause, but the fruit, of their acceptance with God; that other cause, "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ;" that we are still forgiven and accepted, only for the sake of what he hath done and suffered for us; and that all true obedience springs from love to him, grounded on his first loving us. He would labor, therefore, in preaching any part of the law, to keep the love of Christ continually before their eyes, that thence they might draw fresh life, vigor, and strength to run the way of his commandments.

Thus would he preach the law even to those who were pressing on to the mark. But to those who were careless or drawing back he would preach it in another manner, nearly as he did before they were convinced of sin. To those, meanwhile, who were earnest but feeble-minded he would preach the Gospel chiefly; yet variously intermixing more or less of the law, according to their various necessities.

By preaching the law in the manner above described he would teach them how to walk in Him whom they had received. Yea, and the same means (the main point wherein, it seems, your mistake lies) would both sustain and increase their spiritual life. For the commands are food as well as the promises; food equally wholesome, equally substantial. These also duly applied not only direct, but likewise nourish and strengthen the soul.

Of this you appear not to have the least conception; therefore, I will endeavor to explain it. I ask, then, do not all the children of God experience that when God gives them to see deeper into his blessed law; whenever he gives a new degree of light, he gives likewise a new degree of strength? Now I see he that loves me bids me do this; and now I feel I can do it, through Christ strengthening me.

Thus light and strength are given by the same means, and frequently in the same moment; although sometimes there is a space between. For instance: I hear the command, "Let your com-

munication be always in grace, meet to minister grace to the hearers." God gives me more light into this command. I see the exceeding height and depth of it. At the same time I see (by the same light from above) how far I have fallen short. I am ashamed; I am humbled before God. I earnestly desire to keep it better; I pray to him that hath loved me for more strength, and I have the petition I ask of him. Thus the law not only convicts the unbeliever and enlightens the believing soul, but also conveys food to a believer; sustains and increases his spiritual life and strength.

And if it increases his spiritual life and strength it cannot but increase his comfort also. For doubtless the more we are alive to God, the more we shall rejoice in him; the greater measure of his strength we receive, the greater will be our consolation also.

And all this, I conceive, is clearly declared in one single passage of Scripture:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb." They are both food and medicine; they both refresh, strengthen, and nourish the soul.

Not that I would advise to preach the law without the Gospel, any more than the Gospel without the law. Undoubtedly, both should be preached in their turns; yea, both at once, or both in one: all the conditional promises are instances of this. They are law and Gospel mixed together.

According to this model I should advise every preacher continually to preach the law; the law grafted upon, tempered by, and animated with the spirit of the Gospel. I advise him to declare, explain, and enforce every command of God; but, meantime, to declare in every sermon (and the more explicitly the better) that the first and great command to a Christian is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;" that Christ is all in all, our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" that all life, love, strength, are from him alone, and all freely given to us through faith. And it will ever be found that the law thus preached both enlightens and strengthens the soul; that it both nourishes and teaches; that it is the guide, "food, medicine, and stay" of the believing soul.

Thus all the apostles built up believers; witness all the epistles

of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John. And upon this plan all the Methodists first set out. In this manner not only my brother and I, but Mr. Maxfield, Nelson, James Jones, Westell, and Reeves all preached at the beginning.

By this preaching it pleased God to work those mighty effects in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Yorkshire, and Newcastle. By means of this twenty-nine persons received remission of sins in one day at Bristol only, most of them while I was opening and enforcing, in this manner, our Lord's Sermon upon the Mount.

In this manner John Downes, John Bennet, John Haughton, and all the other Methodists preached till James Wheatly came among them, who never was clear, perhaps not sound in the faith. According to his understanding was his preaching; an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling's—

Verses smooth and soft as cream.

In which was neither depth nor stream.

Yet (to the utter reproach of the Methodist congregations) this man became a most popular preacher. He was admired more and more wherever he went, till he went over the second time into Ireland, and conversed more intimately than before with some of the Moravian preachers.

The consequence was that he leaned more and more both to their doctrine and manner of preaching. At first several of our preachers complained of this; but, in the space of a few months (so incredible is the force of soft words), he, by slow and imperceptible degrees, brought almost all the preachers then in the kingdom to think and speak like himself.

These, returning to England, spread the contagion to some others of their brethren. But still the far greater part of the Methodist preachers thought and spoke as they had done from the beginning.

This is the plain fact. As to the fruit of this new manner of preaching (entirely new to the Methodists), speaking much of the promises, little of the commands (even to unbelievers, and still less to believers), you think it has done great good; I think it has done great harm.

I think it has done great harm to the preachers; not only to James Wheatly himself, but to those who have learned of him—David Trathen, Thomas Webb, Robert Swindells, and John Madderly; I fear to others also, all of whom are but shadows of what they were; most of them have exalted themselves above measure, as if they only “preached Christ, preached the Gospel.” And as

highly as they have exalted themselves, so deeply have they despised their brethren, calling them "legal preachers, legal wretches," and (by a cant name) "doctors," or "doctors of divinity." They have not a little despised their ministers also for "countenancing the doctors," as they termed them. They have made their faults (real or supposed) common topics of conversation; hereby cherishing in themselves the very spirit of Ham; yea, of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

I think it has likewise done great harm to their hearers, diffusing among them their own prejudice against the other preachers; against their ministers, me in particular (of which you have been an undeniable instance), against the scriptural, Methodist manner of preaching Christ, so that they could no longer bear sound doctrine; they could no longer hear the plain old truth with profit or pleasure, nay, hardly with patience.

After hearing such preachers for a time you yourself (need we farther witnesses?) could find in my preaching no food for your soul, nothing to strengthen you in the way, no inward experience, of a believer; it was all barren and dry; that is, you had no taste for mine or John Nelson's preaching; it neither refreshed nor nourished you.

Why, this is the very thing I assert: That the gospel preachers, so-called, corrupt their hearers; they vitiate their taste, so that they cannot relish sound doctrine; and spoil their appetite, so that they cannot turn it into nourishment; they, as it were, feed them with sweetmeats, till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial, which make them all life and spirit for the present; but, meantime, their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word.

Hence it is that (according to the constant observation I have made in all parts both of England and Ireland) preachers of this kind (though quite the contrary appears at first) spread death, not life, among their hearers. As soon as that flow of spirits goes off they are without life, without power, without any strength or vigor of soul; and it is extremely difficult to recover them, because they still cry out, "Cordials! Cordials!" of which they have had too much already, and have no taste for the food which is convenient for them. Nay, they have an utter aversion to it, and that confirmed by principle, having been taught to call it husks, if not poison: how much more to those bitters which are previously needful to restore their decayed appetite!

This was the very case when I went last into the north. For some time before my coming John Downes had scarce been able to preach at all; the three others in the round were such as styled themselves as gospel preachers. When I came to review the societies, with great expectation of finding a vast increase, I found most of them lessened by one third; one entirely broken up. That of Newcastle itself was less by a hundred members than when I visited it before. And of those that remained, the far greater number in every place were cold, weary, heartless, dead. Such were the blessed effects of this gospel preaching! of this new method of preaching Christ!

On the other hand, when, in my return, I took an account of the societies in Yorkshire, chiefly under the care of John Nelson, one of the old way, in whose preaching you could find no life, no food, I found them all alive, strong, and vigorous of soul, believing, loving, and praising God their Saviour, and increased in number from eighteen or nineteen hundred to upward of three thousand. These had been continually fed with that wholesome food which you could neither relish nor digest. From the beginning they had been taught both the law and the Gospel. "God loves you; therefore, love and obey him. Christ died for you; therefore, die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore, rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore, live to God, till you live with him in glory."

So we preached, and so you believed. This is the scriptural way, the Methodist way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left! I am, my dear friend,

Your ever affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

SALVATION BY FAITH.

(Printed in the year 1779.)

1. It is now upward of forty years since my brother and I were convinced of that important truth, which is the foundation of all real religion, that "by grace we are saved through faith." And as soon as we believed, we spoke; when we saw it ourselves, we immediately began declaring it to others. And, indeed, we could hardly speak of any thing else, either in public or private. It shone upon our minds with so strong a light that it was our constant theme. It was our daily subject, both in verse and prose; and we vehemently defended it against all mankind.

2. But in doing this we met with abundance of difficulty ; we were assaulted and abused on every side. We were every-where represented as mad dogs, and treated accordingly. We were stoned in the streets, and several times narrowly escaped with our lives. In sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets of all kinds we were painted as unheard-of monsters. But this moved us not; we went on, by the help of God, testifying salvation by faith both to small and great, and not counting our lives dear unto ourselves, so we might finish our course with joy.

3. While we were thus employed another storm arose from a quarter whence we least expected it. Some of our familiar friends declared open war against us for preaching salvation by works ! This we could not in any wise understand; we wondered what they meant. We utterly disavowed the charge; we denied it in the strongest terms. We declared over and over, both in public and private, " We believe and constantly preach salvation by faith. Salvation by works is a doctrine we abhor; we neither preach nor believe it." But it did not avail; say what we would, the same charge was still repeated; and that not only when we were at a convenient distance, but even before our face.

4. At first we were inclined to think that many who affirmed this did not believe themselves; that it was merely a copy of their countenance, spoken *ad movendam invidiam* [to excite ill-will]. And could we have been fully persuaded of this the difficulty would have been solved. But we did not dare to give way to the thought; whatever they might think or say of us, we could not but think they were upright men, and spoke according to their real sentiments. The wonder, therefore, remained, how they could impute to us a doctrine which our soul abhorred, and which we were continually opposing and confuting with all our might.

5. I was in this perplexity when a thought shot across my mind, which solved the matter at once: "This is the key: those that hold, Every one is absolutely predestinated either to salvation or damnation, see no medium between salvation by works and salvation by absolute decrees." It follows, that whosoever denies salvation by absolute decrees, in so doing (according to their apprehension) asserts salvation by works.

6. And herein I verily believe they are right. As averse as I once was to the thought, upon farther consideration I allow there is, there can be, no medium. Either salvation is by absolute decree or it is (in a scriptural sense) by works. Yea, this I will proclaim on the house-top, there is no medium between these.

You must either assert unconditional decrees or (in a sound sense) salvation by works.

7. This deserves a fuller examination; let us consider it more attentively. If the salvation of every man that ever was, is, or shall be finally saved depends wholly and solely upon an absolute, irresistible, unchangeable decree of God, without any regard either to faith or works foreseen, then it is not, in any sense, by works. But neither is it by faith; for unconditional decree excludes faith as well as works; since, if it is either by faith or works foreseen, it is not by unconditional decree. Therefore, salvation by absolute decree excludes both one and the other; and, consequently, upon this supposition, salvation is neither by faith nor by works.

8. If, on the other hand, we deny all absolute decrees, and admit only the conditional one (the same which our blessed Lord hath revealed), "He that believeth shall be saved," we must, according to their apprehension, assert salvation by works. We must do this (in a sound sense of the expression) if we believe the Bible. For seeing no faith avails but that "which worketh by love," which produces both inward and outward good works, to affirm, No man is finally saved without this, is, in effect, to affirm, No man is finally saved without works. It is plain, then, if we affirm, No man is saved by an absolute, unconditional decree, but only by a conditional one, we must expect all who hold unconditional decrees will say we teach salvation by works.

9. Let none, therefore, who hold universal redemption be surprised at being charged with this. Let us deny it no more; let us frankly and fairly meet those who advance it upon their own ground. If they charge you with holding salvation by works, answer plainly, "In your sense, I do; for I deny that our final salvation depends upon any absolute, unconditional decree. If, therefore, there be no medium, I do hold salvation by works. But observe: In allowing this, I allow no more than that I am no Calvinist. So that, by making you this concession, you gain—just nothing."

10. I am, therefore, still consistent with myself, as well as consistent with the Bible. I still hold (as I have done above these forty years) that "by grace we are saved through faith;" yet so as not to contradict that other expression of the same apostle, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Meantime, those who maintain absolute predestination, who hold decrees that have no condition at all, cannot be consistent with themselves unless they deny salvation by faith as well as salvation by works. For,

if only "he that believeth shall be saved," then is faith a condition of salvation; and God hath decreed, from all eternity, that it should be such. But if the decree admit of any condition, it is not an unconditional decree. Either, therefore, you must renounce your unconditional decrees or deny that faith is the condition of salvation; or (which is just the same thing) affirm that a man may be saved without either faith or works.

11. And I am consistent with myself as well as with the Bible when I affirm that none shall be finally saved by any "faith" but that "which worketh by love," both inward and outward holiness. I fear many of them that hold unconditional decrees are not sensible of this. For they seriously believe themselves to be in the high road to salvation, though they are far from inward (if not outward) holiness. They have not "put on humbleness of mind, bowels of mercy, brotherly kindness." They have no gentleness, no meekness, no long-suffering, so far are they from the "love that endureth all things." They are under the power of sin, of evil surmising, of anger; yea, of outward sin. For they scruple not to say to their brother, "Thou fool!" They not only on a slight provocation make no scruple of rendering evil for evil, of returning railing for railing, but they bring railing accusations unprovoked; they pour out floods of the lowest, basest invectives. And yet they are within the decree! I instance in the two late publications of Mr. Rowland Hill. "O," says Mr. Hill, "but Mr. Wesley is a wicked man." What then? Is he more wicked than him that disputed with Michael about the body of Moses? How, then, durst he bring a railing accusation against a man when an archangel durst not bring one against the devil? O, fight, fight for an unconditional decree! For if there be any condition, how can you be saved?

GOD'S EYES ARE OVER ALL THE EARTH.

MANY years ago, as my eldest brother was walking in the back street of Hackney, a gentleman accosted him, and said: "Sir, I am old, and I would willingly inform you of a remarkable scene of Providence, that it may be remembered when I am gone hence: I was walking here some time since (as I frequently do), early in the morning, when a chariot stopped at a little distance from me, and a young lady stepping out, ran by me with all her might. A

gentleman quickly followed her, caught her, and brought her back, when I just heard her say, 'What, my dear, will you serve me so?' Immediately that door over against us opened, and he thrust her in before him. I mused upon it all day and all night, and was very uneasy. In the morning a gardener which I employed coming in, I asked him, 'Do you know such a house in Hackney?' He answered, 'Sir, I am going to trim the trees in the garden next to it, and I will make any inquiries which you desire, and bring you back the best account I can.' The account he gave me the next morning was this: When I went to work, I saw over a low hedge a gardener trimming the trees in the other garden, and I asked him, 'Pray, who lives in that house?' On his answering, 'A mad doctor,' I asked, 'Has he many patients?' He said, 'I do not know, though I dine in the house; for he never suffers any to see them.' I said, 'I will give you a pot of beer if you can find the name of a young lady that came in a day or two ago.' He answered, 'I cannot promise; but I will do my best when I go in to dinner.' When I saw him again, he said, 'No patient in the house dares speak to any one, and I could get no pen, ink, and paper; but I got a pin and a card, on which a young woman has pricked her name; here it is.' I took the card, and knew the name. The next day I went to her father, and asked, 'Sir, where is your daughter?' He said, 'She is lately married to a very worthy man, and is gone with her husband into the country.' I then told him the story, and we went together to the lord chief-justice. Early in the morning we went to the doctor's house and knocked at the door. He looked through a little grate, and bade us go on our way; we had no business with him. I answered, 'Here is the lord chief-justice's warrant and his tipstaff. Open the door, or we shall break it open.' He then opened it, and I asked, 'Where is the young lady that was brought in hither three days ago?' He answered, 'There is no such person in my house; you may search it from top to bottom.' We did so, but could not find any trace of her. Coming down the stairs, I said, 'Is there no one under these stairs?' The doctor answered, 'There is a poor creature, but she is so outrageous that we are obliged to shut her up in the dark.' On his opening the door, she put out her head. My friend sighed, and said, 'I know nothing of this poor thing.' She answered, 'What, sir, am I so altered in three days that you do not know your own daughter?' He immediately knew her voice and took her home. Her husband was very glad to refund her fortune."

JOHN WESLEY.

A REMARKABLE PROVIDENCE.

A GENTLEMAN walking with Mr. Chapoon (uncle to Mr. Roquet), in Moorfields, proposed stepping into Bedlam. After they had walked there awhile they were turning to go out, when a young woman cried, "Sir, I desire to speak with you." His friend said, "Sure, you will not stay to hear a mad woman's tale." He answered, "Indeed, I will;" on which the other went away. She then said, "My father left me and my fortune in the hands of my uncle. A young gentleman offered me marriage, and all things were agreed on, when one morning my uncle took me out with him in the chariot, as he said, to see a friend; but instead of this he brought me to Bedlam, where I have been confined ever since."

"Your story is plausible," said Mr. C., "but how shall I know it is the truth?" "Very easily," said she. "The gentleman that was to marry me lives within a day's journey of London. Write to him, and tell him you have something to say concerning me, and would be glad to meet him at such a place in town. If he does not come let this all pass for a mad woman's dream." Mr. C. wrote, and asked the gentleman, who came to the place appointed, whether he knew such a person. He answered, "Perfectly well. We were to have been married before now; but her uncle sent me word she was taken ill." Mr. C. then told him the whole story. He immediately sent to her uncle, who was very ready to take her out and pay her fortune to avoid further trouble.

So the curiosity of one to see a strange place, and of another to hear a strange tale, was a means of detecting a notorious scene of villainy, and of setting an innocent sufferer at liberty!

JOHN WESLEY.

THE BROTHERS' STEPS.

LAST summer [1780] I received a letter from a friend, wherein were these words:

"I think it would be worth your while to take a view of those wonderful marks of the Lord's hatred to dueling, called The Brothers' Steps. They are in the fields, about a third of a mile northward from Montague House, and the awful tradition concerning them is that two brothers quarreled about a worthless woman, and, according to the fashion of those days, fought with sword and pistol. The prints of their feet are about the depth of three inches, and nothing will vegetate so much as to disfigure them. The number is only eighty-three, but probably some

are at present filled up; for I think there were formerly more in the center, where each unhappy combatant wounded the other to death; and a bank on which the first who fell died retains the form of his agonizing couch, by the curse of barrenness, while grass flourishes all about it. Mr. George Hall, who was the librarian of Lincoln's Inn, first showed me those steps twenty-eight years ago, when, I think, they were not quite so deep as now. He remembered them about thirty years, and the man who first showed them to him about thirty more, which goes back to the year 1692; but I suppose they originated in King Charles the Second's reign. My mother well remembered their being plowed up and corn sown to deface them, about fifty years ago, but all was labor in vain; for the prints returned in a while to their pristine form, as probably will those that are now filled up. Indeed, I think an account of them in your Magazine would be a pious memorial of their lasting reality.

"These hints are only offered as a small token of my good-will to yourself and the work, by your son and brother in the Gospel, JOHN WALSH."

This account appeared to me so very extraordinary that I knew not what to think of it. I knew Mr. Walsh to be a person of good understanding and real piety, and he testified what he had seen with his own eyes; but still I wanted more witnesses, till, awhile ago, being at Mr. Cary's, in Copthall Buildings, I occasionally mentioned The Brothers' Footsteps, and asked the company if they had heard any thing of them. "Sir," said Mr. Cary, "sixteen years ago I saw and counted them myself." Another added, "And I saw them four years ago." I could then no longer doubt but they had been, and a week or two after I went with Mr. Cary and another person to seek them.

We sought for near half an hour in vain. We could find no steps at all within a quarter of a mile, no, nor half a mile, north of Montague House. We were almost out of hope, when an honest man who was at work directed us to the next ground, adjoining to a pond. There we found what we sought for, about three quarters of a mile north of Montague House, and about five hundred yards east of Tottenham Court Road. The steps answer Mr. Walsh's description. They are of the size of a large human foot, about three inches deep, and lie nearly from north-east to south-west. We counted only seventy-six, but we were not exact in counting. The place where one or both the brothers are supposed to have fallen is still bare of grass. The laborer showed us, also, the bank where (the tradition is) the wretched woman sat to see the combat.

What shall we say to these things? Why, to atheists or infidels of any kind, I would not say one word about them. For "if they hear not Moses and the prophets," they will not regard any thing of this kind. But to men of candor who believe the Bible

to be of God I would say, Is not this an astonishing instance, held forth to all the inhabitants of London, of the justice and power of God? Does not the curse he has denounced upon this ground bear some little resemblance to that of our Lord on the barren fig-tree, "Henceforth let no fruit grow upon thee forever?" I see no reason or pretense for any rational man to doubt of the truth of the story, since it has been confirmed by these open, visible tokens for more than a hundred years successively.

A PROVIDENTIAL EVENT.

THE forty king's scholars at Westminster school lodge in one room, which is called the dormitory. While my eldest brother was at school, the head boy cried out vehemently one morning, "Lads, lads! you oversleep yourselves! you lie too late; it is time to be at school." They all started up, dressed as quick as they could, and ran down with him. When they came into the cloisters, one who was a little before the rest saw something white, and cried out, "What have we got here?" They went up to it, and found a man stark naked, and so benumbed that he could not speak. Just then the clock struck two. They took him up, carried him into the dormitory, and put him into a warm bed. After some rest he recovered his senses and speech; and being asked how he came into that condition, he told them, as he was coming over Chelsea Fields he was robbed by two footpads, who then stripped him stark naked, tied him neck and heels, and threw him into a ditch. There he must have perished, but that some young women coming to market very early in the morning heard him groan, and, going to the ditch, untied him and then ran away. He made toward the town as well as he could, till, being unable to walk any farther, he crept into the cloisters upon his hands and feet, where he lay till the king's scholars came. Probably in an hour or two he would have expired. After he had slept some hours they gave him something warm to drink; then one gave him a shirt, another a coat or waistcoat, others what they could spare, till they had clothed him from head to foot. They then collected for him among themselves about forty shillings, and wished him well home.

See the wisdom of God, making the sport of a boy the means of saving a poor man's life!

JOHN WESLEY.

AN EXTRAORDINARY CURE.

BISHOP HALL, speaking of the good offices which angels do to God's servants, says: "Of this kind was that marvelous cure which was wrought upon a poor cripple at St. Madern's, in Cornwall; whereof, besides the attestation of many hundreds of the neighbors, I took a strict examination in my last visitation. This man, for sixteen years together, was obliged to walk upon his hands by reason the sinews of his legs were so contracted. Upon an admonition in his dream, to wash in a certain well, he was suddenly so restored to his limbs that I saw him able to walk and get his own maintenance. The name of this cripple was John Trebble."

And were "many hundreds of the neighbors," together with Bishop Hall, deceived in so notorious a matter of fact? or did they all join together to palm such a falsehood on the world? O, incredulity! what ridiculous shifts art thou driven to! what absurdities wilt thou not believe, rather than own any extraordinary work of God!

MURDER PREVENTED BY A THREEFOLD DREAM.

MONDAY, April 2, 1781, I was informed by a person in an eminent station of a very uncommon incident:

He had occasion to correct, with a few stripes, a lad that lived with him at Rochester, which he resented so as to leave his place. But some time after he seemed to repent, humbled himself, and was received again. He now behaved in a most becoming manner, and was doubly diligent in his service.

But his mistress dreamed one night that this lad was going to cut her throat, and she had a twin sister between whom and her there is so strange a sympathy that if either of them is ill or particularly affected at any time the other is so likewise. This sister wrote to her from another part of the kingdom that she had dreamed the very same thing. She carried this letter to her father, a gentleman that lives not far off, and was surprised to hear that he likewise, on the same night, had had a dream to the same effect.

The lad had been observed to come up, about noon, into his lady's apartment, with a case-knife in his hand; and being asked why he did so, he said he was going into the adjoining room to scrape the dirt off from his master's embroidered clothes.

His master now took the lad aside and examined him strictly. After denying it for a considerable time, it was at length extorted from him that he had always remembered, with indignation, his master's severity to him, and that he was fully resolved to be revenged, but in what particular manner he would not confess. On this he was totally dismissed without delay. JOHN WESLEY.

AN ANSWER TO A REPORT.

I HAVE lately heard, to my no small surprise, that a person professing himself a Quaker, and supposed to be a man of some character, has confidently reported that he has been at Sunderland himself, and inquired into the case of Elizabeth Hobson; that she was a woman of a very indifferent character; that the story she told was purely her own invention, and that John Wesley himself was now fully convinced that there was no truth in it.

From what motive a man should invent and publish all over England (for I have heard this in various places) a whole train of absolute, notorious falsehoods, I cannot at all imagine. On the contrary, I declare to all the world: 1. That Elizabeth Hobson was an eminently pious woman; that she lived and died without the least blemish of any kind, without the least stain upon her character. 2. That the relation could not possibly be her own invention, as there were many witnesses to several parts of it: as Mr. Parker, the two attorneys whom she employed, Miss Hosmer, and many others. And, 3. That I myself am fully persuaded that every circumstance of it is literally and punctually true.

I know that those who fashionably deny the existence of spirits are hugely disgusted at accounts of this kind. I know that they incessantly labor to spread this disgust among those that are of a better mind; because if one of these accounts be admitted, their whole system falls to the ground. But, whoever is pleased or displeased, I must testify what I believe to be the truth. Indeed, I never myself saw the appearance of an unbodied spirit, and I never saw the commission of a murder. Yet, upon the testimony of unexceptionable witnesses, I can firmly believe both one and the other.

JOHN WESLEY.

SELF-DENIAL AND BENEVOLENCE.

NEWINGTON, *December 10, 1748.*

DEAR SIR: 1. I have read your letter with attention, and much approve of the spirit with which it is wrote. You speak in love. I desire to do so, too, and then no harm can be done on either side. You appear not to be wedded to your own opinion, but open to farther conviction. I would willingly be of the same temper, not obstinately attached to either side of the question. I am clearly satisfied of the necessity of this; a willing witness to see what as yet I see not. For I know an unwillingness to be convinced would utterly blind either you or me; and that if we are resolved to retain our present opinion, reason and argument signify nothing.

2. I shall not, therefore, think it is time or pains misemployed to give the whole cause a second hearing; to recite the occasion of every step I have taken, and the motives inducing me so to do, and then to consider whatsoever either you or others have urged on the contrary side of the question.

3. Twenty-nine years since, when I had spent a few months at Oxford, having, as I apprehended, an exceeding good constitution, and being otherwise in health, I was a little surprised at some symptoms of a paralytic disorder. I could not imagine what should occasion the shaking of my hand, till I observed it was always worst after breakfast, and that if I intermitted drinking tea for two or three days it did not shake at all. Upon inquiry, I found tea had the same effect upon others also of my acquaintance; and, therefore, saw that this was one of its natural effects (as several physicians have often remarked), especially when it is largely and frequently drank; and most of all on persons of weak nerves. Upon this I lessened the quantity, drank it weaker, and added more milk and sugar. But still for above six-and-twenty years I was more or less subject to the same disorder.

4. July was two years since I began to observe that abundance of the people in London with whom I conversed labored under the same and many other paralytic disorders, and that in a much higher degree; insomuch, that some of their nerves were quite unstrung, their bodily strength quite decayed, and they could not go through their daily labor. I inquired, "Are you not a hard drinker?" and was answered by one and another and another, "No, indeed, sir, not I; I drink scarce any thing but a little tea, morning and night." I immediately remembered my own case, and,

after weighing the matter thoroughly, easily gathered from many concurring circumstances that it was the same case with them.

5. I considered: "What an advantage would it be to these poor enfeebled people if they would leave off what so manifestly impairs their health, and thereby hurts their business also! Is there nothing equally cheap which they could use? Yes, surely; and cheaper, too. If they used English herbs in its stead (which would cost either nothing or what is next to nothing), with the same bread, butter, and milk, they would save just the price of the tea. And hereby they might not only lessen their pain, but in some degree their poverty too; for they would be able to work (as well as to save) considerably more than they can do now. And by this means, if they are in debt, they might be more just, paying away what they either earned or saved. If they are not in debt they might be more merciful, giving it away to them that want."

6. I considered farther: "What an advantage might this be, particularly in such a body of men as those who are united together in these societies, who are both so numerous and so poor! How much might be saved in so numerous a body, even in this single article of expense! And how greatly is all that can possibly be saved in every article wanted daily by those who have not even food convenient for them!"

7. I soon perceived that this latter consideration was of a more general nature than the former, and that it affected many of those whom the other did not so immediately concern; seeing it was as needful for all to save needless expenses as for some to regain the health they had impaired; especially, considered as members of a society, the wants of which they could not be unapprised of. They knew, of those to whom they were so peculiarly united, some had not food to sustain nature; some were destitute of even necessary clothing; some had not where to lay their head. They knew, or might know, that the little contributions made weekly did in nowise suffice to remove these wants, being barely sufficient to relieve the sick; and even that in so scanty a manner that I know not if some of them have not with their allowance pined away and at length died for want. If you and I have not saved all we could to relieve these, how shall we face them at the throne of God?

8. I reflected: "If one only would save all that he could in this single instance, he might surely feed or clothe one of his brethren, and perhaps save one life. What, then, might be done if ten

thousand, or one thousand or only five hundred would do it? yea, if half that number should say, 'I will compute this day what I have expended in tea weekly or yearly. I will immediately enter on cheaper food, and whatever is saved hereby I will put into that poor-box weekly, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked.' I am mistaken if any among us need want either food or raiment from that hour."

9. I thought farther: "It is said, nay, many tell me to my face, I can persuade this people to any thing. I will make a fair trial. If I cannot persuade them, there may be some good effect. All who do not willfully shut their eyes will see that I have no such influence as they supposed. If I can persuade any number, many who are now weak or sick will be restored to health and strength. Many will pay those debts which others, perhaps equally poor, can but ill-afford to lose. Many will be less straitened in their own families. Many, by helping their neighbor, will lay up for themselves treasures in heaven."

10. Immediately it struck into my mind, "But example must go before precept; therefore, I must not plead an exemption for myself from a daily practice of twenty-seven years. I must begin." I did so. I left it off myself in August, 1746. And I have now had sufficient time to try the effects, which have fully answered my expectation. My paralytic complaints are all gone, my hand is steady as it was at fifteen, although I must expect that or other weaknesses soon, as I decline into the vale of years. And so considerable a difference do I find in my expense that I can make it appear, from the accounts now in being, in only those four families at London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle, I save upward of fifty pounds a year.

11. The first to whom I explained these things at large, and whom I advised to set the same example to their brethren, were a few of those who rejoice to assist my brother and me, as our sons in the Gospel. A week after I proposed it to about forty of those whom I believed to be strong in faith, and the next morning to about sixty more, entreating them all to speak their minds freely. They did so, and in the end saw the good which might ensue, yielded to the force of Scripture and reason, and resolved all (but two or three), by the grace of God, to make the trial without delay.

12. In a short time I proposed it, but with all the tenderness I could, first, to the body of those who are supposed to have living faith, and, after staying a few days (that I might judge the bet-

ter how to speak), to the whole society. It soon appeared (as I doubted not but it would) how far these were from calling me rabbi, from implicitly submitting to my judgment, or implicitly following my example. Objections rose in abundance from all sides. These I now proceed to consider, whether they are advanced by you or by others, and whether pointed at the premises or directly at the conclusion.

13. I. Some objected: "Tea is not unwholesome at all; not in any kind prejudicial to health."

To these I reply: First. You should not be so sure of this. Even that casual circumstance, related in Dr. Short's history of it, might incline you to doubt; namely, that "while the Chinese dry the leaves and turn it with their hands upon the tin plates, the moisture of them is so extremely corrosive that it eats into the flesh if not wiped off immediately." It is not probable, then, that what remains in the leaves is quite friendly to the human body.

Secondly. Many eminent physicians have declared their judgment, that it is prejudicial in several respects; that it gives rise to numberless disorders, particularly those of the nervous kind; and that, if frequently used by those of weak nerves, it is no other than a slow poison.

Thirdly. If all physicians were silent in the case, yet plain fact is against you. And this speaks loud enough. It was prejudicial to *my* health; it is so to many at this day.

14. "But it is not so to me," says the objector. "Why, then, should I leave it off?"

I answer: First. To give an example to those to whom it is undeniably prejudicial.

Secondly. That you may have the more wherewith to give bread to the hungry and raiment to the naked.

15. "But I cannot leave it off; for it helps my health. Nothing else will agree with me."

I answer: First. Will nothing else agree with you? I know not how to believe that. I suppose your body is much of the same kind with that of your great grandmother. And do you think nothing else agreed with her or with any of her progenitors? What poor, puling, sickly things must all the English then have been till within these hundred years! But you know they were not so. Other things agreed with them, and why not with you?

Secondly. If, in fact, nothing else will, if tea has already weak-

ened your stomach and impaired your digestion to such a degree, it has hurt you more than you are aware. It has prejudiced your health extremely. You have need to abhor it as deadly poison, and to renounce it from this very hour.

So says a drinker of drams: "Nothing else will agree with me. Nothing else will raise my spirits. I can digest nothing without them." Indeed! Is it so? Then touch no more if you love your life.

Thirdly. Suppose nothing else agrees with you at first, yet in a while many things will. When I first left off tea I was half asleep all day long; my head ached from morning to night. I could not remember a question asked even till I could return an answer; but in a week's time all these inconveniences were gone, and have never returned since.

Fourthly. I have not found one single exception yet; not one person in all England with whom, after sufficient trial made, nothing else would agree.

It is, therefore, well worth while for you to try again if you have any true regard for your own health, or any compassion for those who are perishing all around you for want of the common necessities of life.

16. If you are sincere in this plea, if you do not talk of your health while the real objection is your inclination, make a fair trial thus: (1) Take half a pint of milk every morning, with a little bread, not boiled, but warmed only; a man in tolerable health might double the quantity. (2) If this is too heavy, add as much water, and boil it together, with a spoonful of oatmeal. (3) If this agrees not, try half a pint, or a little more, of water gruel, neither thick nor thin; not sweetened, for that may be apt to make him sick, but with a very little butter, salt, and bread. (4) If this disagrees, try sage, green balm, mint, or pennyroyal tea, infusing only so much of the herb as just to change the color of the water. (5) Try two or three of these mixed in various proportions. (6) Try ten or twelve other English herbs. (7) Try foltron, a mixture of herbs to be had at many grocers', far healthier as well as cheaper than tea. (8) Try cocoa. If, after having tried each of these for a week or ten days, you find none of them will agree with your constitution, then use (weak green) tea again; but at the same time know that your having used it so long has brought you near the chambers of death.

17. II. "I do not know," says another, "but teas may hurt me; but there is nothing saved by leaving it off; for I am sure that other

things cost full as much." I pray, what other things? Sack and sugar cost more, and so do ragouts, or pheasants, or ortolans. But what is this to the point? We do not say, All things are cheaper; but any of the things above mentioned are, at least, if prudently managed. Therefore, if you really desire to save what you can, you will drink tea no more.

18. "Well, I do not design to buy any more myself; but where others drink it there is nothing saved by my abstaining." I answer: First. Yes; something is saved, though but little; especially if you tell them before, "I shall not drink tea." And many a little, you know, put together will make a great sum.

Secondly. If the whole saved were ever so little, if it were but two mites, when you save this for God and your brethren's sake it is much.

Thirdly. Your example in saving a little now may occasion the saving of more by and by.

Fourthly. It is not a little advantage which you may reap, even now, to your own soul by habituating yourself not to be ashamed of being singular in a good thing; by taking up your cross and denying yourself even in so small an instance; and by accustoming yourself to act on rational grounds, whether in a little matter or a great.

19. "But what is saved will be no better employed." Do you say this with regard to yourself, or others? If with regard to yourself, it will be your fault if you do not employ it better. I do not say you will, but I am sure you may; and if you do not, it is your own sin and your own shame.

If with regard to others, how do you know that it will not be employed better? I trust it will. It cannot be denied that it often has and that it always may be. And it is highly probable all who save any thing from the best motive will lay it out to the best purpose.

20. "As to example," you say, "I have lately been without hopes of doing any good by it." I suppose you mean because so exceeding few will follow either your example or mine. I am sorry for it. This only gives me a fresh objection to this unwholesome, expensive food, namely, that it has too much hold on the hearts of them that use it; that, to use a scriptural phrase, they are "under the power of" this trifle. If it be so, were there no other reason than this, they ought to throw it away at once; else they no more regard St. Paul than they do you or me; for his rule is home to the point: "All things are lawful for me;

but I will not be brought under the power of any." Away with it then, however lawful (that is, though it were wholesome as well as cheap), if you are already brought "under the power of" it.

And the fewer they are who follow this rule, the greater reason there is that you should add one example more to those few. Though, blessed be God, they are not so few as you suppose. I have met with very many in London who use less of it than they had done for many years; and above a hundred who have plucked out the right eye and cast it from them, who wholly abstain from it.

21. You add, "But I am equally, yea, abundantly more concerned to set an example in all Christian behavior." I grant it. This, therefore, "ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

22. But "one day," you add, "I saw your brother drink tea, which he said was for fear of giving offense."

I answer: First. Learn from hence to follow neither his nor my practice implicitly; but weigh the reason of each, and then follow reason wheresoever it stands. But,

Secondly. Examine your heart, and beware inclination does not put on the shape of reason.

Thirdly. You see with your own eyes I do not drink it at all, and yet I seldom give offense thereby. It is not, then, the bare abstaining, but the manner of doing it, which usually gives the offense.

Fourthly. There is, therefore, a manner wherein you may do it too, and yet give no more offense than I. For instance: If any ask you, simply reply, "I do not drink tea; I never use it." If they say, "Why, you did drink it," answer, "I did so, but I have left it off a considerable time." Those who have either good nature or good manners will say no more. But if any should impertinently add, "O, but why did you leave it off?" answer, mildly, "Because I thought water gruel (suppose) was wholesomer as well as cheaper." If they, with still greater ill manners and impertinence, go on, "What, you do it because Mr. Wesley bids you," reply, calmly, "True; I do it because Mr. Wesley, on good reasons, advises me so to do." If they add the trite cant phrase, "What, you follow man!" reply, without any emotion, "Yes; I follow any man, you or him or any other, who gives me good reason for so doing." If they persist in caviling, close the whole matter with, "I neither drink it nor dispute about it."

23. If you proceed in this manner, with mildness and love, exceeding few will be offended. "But you ought," say some, "to

give up an indifferent thing rather than give an offense to any. So St. Paul: 'I will eat no flesh whilst the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.'" I reply: This is not an indifferent thing if it affects the health either of myself or my brethren. Therefore, that rule relating wholly to things indifferent is not applicable to this case. Would St. Paul have said, "I will drink drams while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend?" "But tea is not so hurtful as drams." I do not believe it is. But it is hurtful, and that is enough. The question does not turn on the degrees of hurtfulness. "However, it is but a small thing." Nay, nothing is small if it touches conscience; much less is it a small thing to preserve my own or my brother's health, or to be a faithful steward even of the mammon of unrighteousness. O, think it not a small thing, whether only one for whom Christ died be fed or hungry, clothed or naked!

To conclude the head of offense: You must at least allow that all this is no plea at all for your drinking tea at home. "Yes, it is; for my husband or parents are offended if I do not drink it." I answer, first, perhaps this, in some rare cases, may be a sufficient reason why a wife or a child should use this food—that is, with them, but nowhere else. But, secondly, try, and not once or twice only, if you cannot overcome that offense by reason, softness, love, patience, long-suffering, joined with constant and fervent prayer.

24. Your next objection is, "I cannot bear to give trouble; therefore I drink whatever others drink where I come, else there is so much hurry about insignificant me."

I answer: First. This is no plea at all for your drinking tea at home. Therefore, touch it not there, whatever you do abroad.

Secondly. Where is the trouble given, even when you are abroad, if they drink tea and you fill your cup with milk and water?

Thirdly. Whatever trouble is taken is not for "insignificant me," but for that poor man who is half starved with cold and hunger; for that miserable woman, who, while she is poisoning herself, wipes her mouth and says she does no evil; who will not believe the poison will hurt her, because it does not (sensibly, at least) hurt you. O, throw it away! let her have one plea less for destroying her body, if not her soul, before the time!

25. You object, farther, "It is my desire to be unknown for any particularity, unless a peculiar love to the souls of those who are present." And, I hope, to the souls of the absent too; yea,

and to their bodies also, in a due proportion, that they may be healthy and fed and clothed and warm, and may praise God for the consolation.

26. You subjoin: "When I had left it off for some months I was continually puzzled with, Why, What, etc.; and I have seen no good effects, but impertinent questions and answers, and unedifying conversation about eating and drinking."

I answer: First. Those who were so uneasy about it plainly showed that you touched the apple of their eye. Consequently, these of all others ought to leave it off; for they are evidently "brought under the power of it."

Secondly. Those impertinent questions might have been cut short by a very little steadiness and common-sense. You need only have taken the method mentioned above, and they would have dropped in the midst.

Thirdly. It is not strange you saw no good effects of leaving it off where it was not left off at all. But you saw very bad effects of not leaving it off, namely, the adding sin to sin; the joining much unedifying conversation to wasteful, unhealthy, self-indulgence.

Fourthly. You need not go far to see many good effects of leaving it off; you may see them in me. I have recovered thereby that healthy state of the whole nervous system which I had in a great degree, and I almost thought irrecoverably lost for considerably more than twenty years. I have been enabled hereby to assist in one year above fifty poor with food or raiment, whom I must otherwise have left (for I had before begged for them all I could) as hungry and naked as I found them. You may see the good effects in above thirty poor people just now before you, who have been restored to health through the medicines bought by that money which a single person has saved in this article. And a thousand more good effects you will not fail to see when her example is more generally followed.

27. Neither is there any need that conversation should be unedifying, even when it turns upon eating and drinking. Nay, from such a conversation, if duly improved, numberless good effects may flow. For how few understand, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." And how glad ought you to be of a fair occasion to observe that, though the kingdom of God does not consist in "meats and drinks," yet without exact temperance in these we cannot have either "righteousness or peace or joy in the Holy Ghost!"

It may, therefore, have a very happy effect if, whenever people

introduce the subject, you directly close in and push it home, that they may understand a little more of this important truth.

28. But "I find at present very little desire to change either my thoughts or practice." Shall I speak plain? I fear, by not standing your ground, by easiness, cowardice, and false shame, you have grieved the Spirit of God, and thereby lost your conviction and desire at once.

Yet you add: "I advise every one to leave off tea if it hurts their health or is inconsistent with frugality, as I advise every one to avoid dainties in meat and vanity in dress from the same principle." Enough, enough! Let this only be well pursued, and it will secure all that I contend for. I advise no persons living to leave it off if it does not hurt the health either of them or their brethren, and if it is not inconsistent with the Christian frugality of cutting off every needless expense.

29. But "to be subject to the consequences of leaving it off again! this I cannot bear."

I answer: First. It may be so. You cannot easily bear it. For, by your giving up the point once, you have made it much harder to stand your ground now than it was at first. Yet still it is worth all your courage and labor, since the reasons for it are as strong as at the beginning.

Secondly. As to the consequences you fear, they are shadowy all; they are a mere lion in the streets. "Much trouble to others." Absolutely none at all, if you take the tea-kettle and fill your cup with water. "Much foolish discourse." Take the preceding advice, and it will be just the reverse. "Nothing helpful toward the renewal of my soul in the image of Jesus Christ." What a deep mistake is this! Is it not helpful to speak closely of the nature of his inward kingdom? to encourage one another in casting off every weight, in removing every hinderance of it? to inure ourselves to the bearing his cross? to bring Christianity into common life, and accustom ourselves to conduct even our minutest actions by the great rules of reason and religion?

30. Is it "not of any importance" to do this? I think it is of vast importance. However, "it is a very small circumstance in self-denial." It is well if you find it so. I am sure I did not. And I believe the case is the same with many others at this day. But you say, "I have so many other assaults of self-indulgence that this is nothing." "It is nothing," said one to a young woman, "to fast once or twice a week; to deny yourself a little food. Why do not you deny yourself as to anger and fretfulness, as to

peevishness and discontent?" She replied, "That I want; so I deny myself in little things first, till I am able to do it in greater." Neither you nor I can mend her reply. Go thou and do likewise.

31. I have done what I proposed; and indeed in many more words than I at first intended. I have told you the occasions of every step I have taken, and the motives inducing me thereto, and have considered what either you or others have urged on the contrary side of the question.

And now, the advice I would give upon the whole is this: First. Pray earnestly to God for clear light; for a full, piercing, and steady conviction that this is the more excellent way. Pray for a spirit of universal self-denial, of cheerful temperance, of wise frugality; for bowels of mercies; for a kind, compassionate spirit, tenderly sensible of the various wants of your brethren; and for firmness of mind; for a mild, even courage, without fear, anger, or shame. Then you will once more, with all readiness of heart, make this little (or great) sacrifice to God; and withal present your soul and body a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ.

ON NERVOUS DISORDERS.

1. WHEN physicians meet with disorders which they do not understand they commonly term them *nervous*; a word that conveys to us no determinite idea, but it is a good cover for learned ignorance. But these are often no natural disorder of the body, but the hand of God upon the soul, being a dull consciousness of the want of God and the unsatisfactoriness of every thing here below. At other times it is conviction of sin, either in a higher or a lower degree. It is no wonder that those who are strangers to religion should not know what to make of this, and that, consequently, all their prescriptions should be useless, seeing they quite mistake the case.

2. But undoubtedly there are nervous disorders which are purely natural. Many of these are connected with other diseases, whether acute or chronical. Many are the forerunners of various distempers, and many the consequences of them. But there are those which are not connected with others, being themselves a distinct, original distemper. And this frequently arises to such a height that it seems to be one species of madness. So one man imagines himself to be made of glass; another thinks he is too tall to go

in at the door. This is often termed the *spleen*, or *vapors*; often *lowness of spirits*; a phrase that, having scarce any meaning, is so much the fitter to be given to this unintelligible disorder. It seems to have taken its rise from hence: we sometimes say, "A man is in high spirits;" and the proper opposite to this is, "He is low-spirited." Does not this imply that a kind of faintness, weariness, and listlessness affects the whole body, so that he is disinclined to any motion, and hardly cares to move hand or foot? But the mind seems chiefly to be affected, having lost its relish of every thing, and being no longer capable of enjoying the things it once delighted in most. Nay, every thing round about is not only flat and insipid, but dreary and uncomfortable. It is not strange if to one in this state life itself is become a burden; yea, so insupportable a burden that many who have all this world can give desperately rush into an unknown world rather than bear it any longer.

3. But what are the causes of this strange disorder? One cause is the use of spirituous liquors. This is one of the horrid effects which naturally follow the swallowing that fashionable poison. That liquid fire lays the foundation of numberless diseases, and of this in particular. It is amazing that the preparing or selling this poison should be permitted (I will not say in any Christian country, but) in any civilized state. "O, it brings in a considerable sum of money to government." True; but is it wise to barter men's lives for money? Surely, that gold is bought too dear if it is the price of blood. Does not the strength of every country consist in the number of its inhabitants? If so, the lessening their number is a loss which no money can compensate. So that it is inexcusable ill husbandry to give the lives of useful men for any sum of money whatever.

4. But a more extensive cause of this disorder than the use of drams, I apprehend, is the use of tea; particularly where it is taken either in large quantities, or strong, or without cream and sugar. "Nay, weak tea is far more hurtful." This is a senseless, shameless falsehood. I long drank hot sugar and water instead of tea, and it did me no hurt at all. But three cups of strong tea will now make my hand shake so that I can hardly write. And let any try the experiment; if any tea make his hand shake it will not be weak tea, but strong. This has exceedingly increased the number of nervous complaints throughout the three kingdoms. And this furnishes us with a satisfactory answer to the common question, "Why are these complaints so general now which were

scarce heard of two or three centuries ago?" For this plain reason: two or three centuries ago no tea was drank in either Britain or Ireland.

5. But allowing both tea and spirituous liquors to have contributed largely to the increase of nervous disorders, yet it may be doubted whether one or both of them are the principal causes of them. The principal causes of them (particularly among those who do not work for their living) are, as Dr. Cadogan justly observes, indolence, intemperance, and irregular passions.

First. Indolence, the not using such a degree of exercise as the constitution requires. To illustrate this: Our body is composed of earth, water, air, and fire; and the two latter are as necessary as the two former. To supply these that curious engine, the lungs, continually takes in the air; to every particle of which a particle of fire is attached, which, being detached from it, is mingled with the blood. Now, exercise quickens the motion of the lungs, and enables them to collect from the air a due quantity of fire. The nerves are the conductors of this ethereal fire, vulgarly called the animal spirits. If this is duly diffused through the whole body we are lively and vigorous; if it is not (which without exercise it cannot be), we soon grow faint and languid. And if other disorders do not ensue those termed nervous surely will, with that whole train of symptoms which are usually comprised in what is termed *lowness of spirits*.

6. Intemperance is another principal cause of this; if not intemperance in drink, which is not quite so common, yet intemperance in meat; the taking more of it than nature requires. Dr. Cheyne well observes it is not generally the quality but the quantity of what we eat that hurts us. What hurts the nerves in particular is the eating too much animal food, especially at night; much more the eating at one meal foods of several different kinds. If we consider how few observe this we shall not wonder that so many have nervous disorders; especially among those that have an opportunity of indulging themselves daily in variety, and who are hereby continually tempted to eat more than nature requires.

7. But there is another sort of intemperance, of which I think Dr. Cadogan does not take the least notice. And yet it is the source of more nervous disorders than even intemperance in food; I mean intemperance in sleep; the sleeping longer than nature requires. This alone will account for the weak nerves of most of our nobility and gentry. Not that I would insist upon the old rule—

*Sex horas quivis poscit, septemque scholaris ;
Octo viator habet ; nebulo quisque novem.*

[Every person requires six hours, a student seven ; the traveler is allowed eight, and every lazy knave nine.]

I would allow between six and seven hours, at an average, to a healthy man ; or an hour more, between seven and eight hours, to an unhealthy man. And I do not remember that in threescore years I have known either man or woman who laid longer in bed than this (whether they slept or no) but in some years they complained of lowness of spirits.

The plain reason of which seems to be, while we sleep all the springs of nature are unbent. And if we sleep longer than is sufficient they are relaxed more than is sufficient, and, of course, grow weaker and weaker. And if we lie longer in bed, though without sleep, the very posture relaxes the whole body ; much more when we are covered up with clothes, which throw back on the body whatever perspires from it. By this means it is stewed in the moist vapor ; it sucks in again what nature had cast out, and the flesh is, as it were, parboiled therein, and becomes more and more soft and flabby ; and the nerves suffer at least as much hereby as any other part of the habit. I cannot therefore but account this, the lying too long in bed, the grand cause of our nervous disorders.

8. And this alone sufficiently answers this question, "Why are we more nervous than our forefathers ?" Because we lie longer in bed ; they, rich and poor, slept about eight, when they heard the curfew bell,* and rose at four ; the bell ringing at that hour (as well as at eight) in every parish in England. We rise (if not obliged to work for our living) at ten, eleven, or twelve. Is it any wonder then, were there no other cause, that we complain of lowness of spirits ?

9. Yet something may be allowed to irregular passions. For as long as the soul and body are united these undoubtedly affect the body ; the nerves in particular. Even violent joy, though it

[**Curfew*.—The ringing of a bell or bells at night as a signal to the inhabitants to rake up their fires and retire to rest. This practice originated in England from an order of William the Conqueror, who directed that at the ringing of the bell, at eight o'clock, every one should put out his light and go to bed. This word is not used in America, although the practice of ringing a bell at nine o'clock continues in many places, and is considered in New England as a signal for people to retire from company to their own abodes ; and in general the signal is obeyed."—*Webster's American Dictionary*.]

Query : Would not some such "signal for people to retire from company to their own abodes" by nine o'clock, at least, be a happy contrivance every-where ? And whether with or without a "signal," ought not all visitors to have the consideration to practice on this rule, as well for their own convenience and health and comfort as for those of the families in which they visit ?]

raises the spirits for a time, does afterward sink them greatly. And every one knows what an influence fear has upon our whole frame. Nay, even "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" puts the mind all out of tune. The same effect have all foolish and hurtful desires. They "pierce us through with many sorrows;" they occasion a deep depression of the spirits; so, above all, does inordinate affection; whereby so many, refusing to be comforted, sorrow even unto death.

10. But is there no cure for this sore evil? Is there no remedy for lowness of spirits? Undoubtedly there is; a most certain cure, if you are willing to pay the price of it. But this price is not silver or gold, nor any thing purchasable thereby. If you would give all the substance of your house for it it would be utterly despised; and all the medicines under the sun avail nothing in this distemper. The whole *materia medica* [entire class of medical substances] put together will do you no lasting service; they do not strike at the root of the disease; but you must remove the cause if you wish to remove the effect.

But this cannot be done by your own strength; it can only be done by the mighty power of God. If you are convinced of this, set about it, trusting in him, and you will surely conquer.

First. Sacredly abstain from all spirituous liquors. Touch them not, on any pretense whatever. To others they may sometimes be of use, but to nervous persons they are deadly poison.

Secondly. If you drink any, drink but little tea, and none at all without eating, or without sugar and cream. "But you like it without." No matter; prefer health before taste.

Thirdly. Every day of your life take at least an hour's exercise between breakfast and dinner. If you will, take another hour before supper, or before you sleep. If you can, take it in the open air; otherwise in the house. If you cannot ride or walk abroad use within a dumb-bell or a wooden horse. If you have not strength to do this for an hour at a time, do it at twice or thrice. Let nothing hinder you. Your life is at stake. Make every thing yield to this.

Fourthly. Take no more food than nature requires. Dine upon one thing, except pudding or pie. Eat no flesh at supper, but something light and easy of digestion.

Fifthly. Sleep early and rise early; unless you are ill never lie in bed much above seven hours. Then you will never lie awake. Your flesh will be firm and your spirits lively.

Sixthly. Above all,

Give not your passions way;
God gave them to thee under lock and key.

Beware of anger; beware of worldly sorrow; beware of the fear that hath torment; beware of foolish and hurtful desires; beware of inordinate affection; remember the kind command, "My son, give me thy heart!" Then shall there be no more complaining of lowness of spirits! But "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," shall keep thy heart and mind in Christ Jesus!

MELVILL HOUSE, *May* 20, 1784.

A SCHEME OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

SUNDAY.—LOVE OF GOD AND SIMPLICITY: MEANS OF WHICH ARE PRAYER AND MEDITATION.

1. HAVE I been simple and recollected in every thing I said or did? Have I (1) been simple in every thing—that is, looked upon God, my good, my pattern, my one desire, my disposer, parent of good; acted wholly for him; bounded my views with the present action or hour? (2) Recollected?—that is, has this simple view been distinct and uninterrupted? Have I, in order to keep it so, used the signs agreed upon with my friends, wherever I was? Have I done any thing without a previous perception of its being the will of God? or without a perception of its being an exercise or a means of the virtue of the day? Have I said any thing without it?

2. Have I prayed with fervor? at going in and out of church? in the church? morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with my friends, at rising? before lying down? on Saturday noon? all the time I am engaged in exterior work in private? before I go into the place of public or private prayer, for help therein? Have I, wherever I was, gone to church morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? and spent from one hour to three in private? Have I in private prayer frequently stopped short and observed what fervor? Have I repeated it over and over, till I adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or paragraph owned I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in his name, and adverted to my Saviour now interceding for me at the right hand of God, and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I duly used ejaculations?—that is, have I every hour

prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? considered with whom I was the last hour, what I did and how? with regard to recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation, and thankfulness? considered the next hour in the same respects, offered up all I do to my Redeemer, begged his assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to his keeping? Have I done this deliberately, not in haste, seriously, not doing any thing else the while, and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day?—that is, have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a collect at nine, twelve, and three? and grace before and after eating? aloud at my own room? deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? every day, unless for necessary mercy, (1) From six, etc., to prayers? (2) From four to five? What was particular in the providence of this day? How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.) (3) On Sunday, from six to seven, with Kempis? from three to four, on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday, from twelve to one, on the Passion? after ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

MONDAY.—LOVE OF MAN.

1. Have I been zealous to do and active in doing good?—that is, (1) Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing, or lessening evil? (2) Have I pursued it with my might? (3) Have I thought any thing too dear to part with to serve my neighbor? (4) Have I spent an hour, at least, every day in speaking to some one or other? (5) Have I given any one up till he expressly renounced me? (6) Have I, before I spoke to any, learned as far as I could his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hinderances, internal and external? fixed the point to be aimed at? then the means to it? (7) Have I in speaking proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them, then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help? (8) Have I in speaking to a stranger explained what religion is not (not negative, not external)? and what it is (a recovery of the image of God)? searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? exhorted and directed him? (9) Have I persuaded

all I could to attend public prayers, sermons, and sacraments, and in general to obey the laws of the Church catholic, the Church of England, the state, the university, and their respective colleges? (10) Have I when taxed with any act of obedience avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness? (11) Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practiced just then? (12) Have I in disputing, (i) Desired him to define the terms of the question; to limit it; what he grants, what denies? (ii) Delayed speaking my opinion? let him explain and prove his? then insinuated and pressed objections? (13) Have I after every visit asked him who went with me, "Did I say any thing wrong?" (14) Have I when any one asked advice directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbor in virtue or pleasure? grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of any one, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner consistent with that end? Have I any way appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5. Has good-will been and appeared to be the spring of all my actions toward others?

6. Have I duly used intercession? (1) Before, (2) After, speaking to any? (3) For my friends on Sunday? (4) For my pupils on Monday? (5) For those who have particularly desired it on Wednesday and Friday? (6) For the family in which I am every day?

DISSIPATION.

1. PERHAPS nothing can be more seasonable at the present time than to bestow a few thoughts on this. It is a fashionable subject, very frequently spoken of, especially in good company. An ingenious writer has lately given us an essay upon the subject. When it fell into my hands a few days since I was filled with a pleasing expectation of seeing it thoroughly explained. But my expectation was not answered; for, although many just and lively things are said there, yet in above twenty pages I could find no definition of dissipation, either bad or good.

2. But "the love of dissipation," says the author, "is the reigning evil of the present day." Allowing it is, I ask, What do you

mean by dissipation? Sometimes you use the word *pleasure* as an equivalent term. But what pleasure do you mean; the pleasures of sense or of the imagination in general, or any particular pleasure of one or the other? At other times you seem to make dissipation the same with luxury, at least with a high degree of it. Sometimes, again, you use *the love of amusement* as the same with *the love of dissipation*. But the question recurs, What amusement do you mean? for there are numberless sorts. So that still, after talking about them so long, we have only a vague, indeterminate notion of a dissipated age, a dissipated nation, or a dissipated man; without having any clear or distinct idea what the word *dissipation* means.

3. Those who are content with slight and superficial views of things may rest in the general account that a dissipated age is one wherein the bulk of mankind, especially those of any rank or fashion, spend the main of their time in eating and drinking, and diversions, and the other pleasures of sense and imagination. And that we live in a dissipated age, in this meaning of the word, is as plain as that the sun shines at noon-day. Most of those that are commonly termed *innocent amusements* fall under this head—the pleasures of imagination. Whenever, therefore, a general fondness of these prevails, that is a dissipated age. A dissipated nation is one where the people in general are vehemently attached to the pleasures of sense and imagination. The smaller vulgar in England are at present passionately fond of the lowest pleasures both of sense and fancy, while the great vulgar are equally engrossed by those they account a higher kind. Meantime, they are all equally dissipated, although in different ways; and so, indeed, is every man and woman that is passionately attached to external pleasure.

4. But without dwelling any longer on the surface of things, let us search the matter to the bottom, and inquire wherein lies the original ground of human dissipation. Let this once be pointed out, and it will place the whole question in the clearest light.

5. Man is an immortal spirit, created in the image and for the enjoyment of God. This is the one, the only end of his being; he exists for no other purpose. God is the center of all spirits; and while they cleave to him they are wise, holy, and happy; but in the same proportion as they are separated from him they are foolish, unholy, and unhappy. This disunion from God is the very essence of human dissipation, which is no other than the scattering the thoughts and affections of the creature from the Crea-

tor. Wherefore fondness for sensual enjoyments of any kind; love of silly, irrational pleasures; love of trifling amusements; luxury, vanity, and a thousand foolish desires and tempers are not so properly dissipation itself as they are the fruits of it, the natural effects of being unhinged from the Creator, the Father, the center of all intelligent spirits.

6. It is this against which the apostle guards in his advice to the Christians at Corinth: "This I speak, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." It might as well be rendered, *without dissipation*, without having your thoughts any way scattered from God. The having our thoughts and affections centered in God, this is Christian simplicity; the having them in any degree uncentered from God, this is dissipation. And it little differs in the real nature of things and in the eye of God, the Judge of all, whether a man be kept in a state of dissipation from God by crowns and empires, and thousands of gold and silver, or by cards and dancing and drinking and dressing and mistressing and masquerades and picking straws.

7. Dissipation is, then, in the very root of it, separation from God; in other words, atheism, or the being without God in the world. It is the negative branch of ungodliness. And, in this true sense of the word, certainly, England is the most dissipated nation that is to be found under heaven. And whether our thoughts and affections are dissipated, scattered from God by women or food or dress or one or ten thousand petty trifles, that dissipation (innocent as it may seem) is equally subversive of all real virtue and all real happiness. It carries its own punishment; though we are loaded with blessings, it often makes our very existence a burden; and, by an unaccountable anxiety, gives a foretaste of what it is to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord!"

JOHN WESLEY.

HILTON PARK, *March 26, 1783.*

TASTE.

(*Published in the year 1780.*)

1. A FEW weeks ago I read with care and attention a celebrated *Essay on Taste*. I cannot say but I entered upon it with great expectation, as I knew the author to be a man of understanding, and one whose natural abilities were improved by a considerable

share of learning. I knew, likewise, that the performance itself had been highly and generally applauded; yea, that the doctor had been honored with the medal which is yearly given by the society to him that produces the best performance on the subject proposed.

2. Yet, to speak the plain truth, I cannot affirm that it altogether answered my expectation. It did not appear to be wrote upon a good plan, neither to be well digested. And there are assertions almost in every chapter which are exceeding disputable. Many of these I could not clearly affirm; some of them I utterly deny. Neither could I find in the whole tract any clear, just definition of the subject. So that, after all he has said, one would still be puzzled to answer the question, "What is Taste?"

3. But is there any better book upon the subject extant? I do not conceive there is. At least I have not seen it, although there are some ingenious thoughts of Mr. Addison upon it in *The Spectator*. And nearly related to this is his fine *Essay on the Pleasures of Imagination*. But taste is a more extensive word. It does not relate to the imagination only.

4. It may be the more difficult to understand the precise meaning of the word, because there are so few words that are synonymous to it. I do not recollect any, either in Greek or Latin; no, nor yet in the English language. Indeed, we have some which are generally supposed to be nearly equivalent with it. So a man of taste is almost the same with a man of genius, a man of sense, or a man of judgment; but none of these mean exactly the same thing.

5. "Most languages," says Mr. Addison, "make use of this metaphor to express that faculty of mind which distinguishes the most concealed faults and nicest perfections in writings." But this definition is far too narrow, for taste refers to other things as well as writings. And when he adds, "It is that faculty of the soul which discovers the beauties of an author with pleasure, and his imperfections with dislike," this is too narrow still; for taste is concerned with many things besides authors.

6. What, then, is taste in the general meaning of the word? It is certainly a faculty of the mind analogous to the sense of taste. By the external sense we relish various foods and distinguish one from the other. By the internal, we relish and distinguish from each other various foods offered to the mind. Taste is therefore that internal sense which relishes and distinguishes its proper object. By relishes, I mean perceives with pleasure; for in the

common acceptation of the word we are not said to have a taste for displeasing, but only for pleasing objects. And as various as those objects are, so various are the species of taste.

7. Some of these are objects of the understanding. Such are all speculative truths, particularly those of a metaphysical or mathematical nature. So we say a man has a taste for metaphysics, which is more than to say he has judgment therein. It implies over and above that he has a relish for them ; that he finds a sweetness in the study of them. And when we say a man has a taste for the mathematics, we mean by that expression, not only that he is capable of understanding them, but that he takes pleasure therein.

8. Another species of taste is that which relates to the objects that gratify the imagination. Thus we are accustomed to say a man has a taste for grandeur, for novelty, or for beauty ; meaning thereby that he takes pleasure in grand, in new, or in beautiful objects, whether they are such by nature or by art. And herein there is an unbounded variety: I mean in the different tastes of men; some having a taste for grandeur, some for beauty. Some, again, have a taste for one kind of beauty, and others for another. Some have a taste for the beauties of nature, others for those of art. The former for flowers, meadows, fields, or woods; the latter for painting or poetry. But some have a taste both for the one and the other.

9. But is there not likewise a kind of internal sense whereby we relish the happiness of our fellow creatures even without any reflection on our own interest, without any reference to ourselves ? whereby we bear a part in the prosperity of others and rejoice with them that rejoice ? Surely there is something still in the human mind in many, if not in all (whether by nature or from a higher principle), which interests us in the welfare not only of our relatives, our friends, and our neighbors, but of those who are at the greatest distance from us, whether in time or place. And the most generous minds have most of this taste for human happiness.

10. May we not likewise observe that there is a beauty in virtue, in gratitude, and disinterested benevolence ? And have not many at least a taste for this ? Do they not discern and relish it wherever they find it ? Yea, does it not give them one of the most delicate pleasures whereof the human mind is capable ? Is not this taste of infinitely more value than a taste for any or all the pleasures of imagination ? And is not this pleasure infinitely

more delicate than any that ever resulted, yea, or can result, from the utmost refinements of music, poetry, or painting?

11. As to taste in general, internal as well as external taste seems to belong to all mankind, although infinitely diversified both as to the objects and the degrees of it. When, therefore, we say, "A man has no taste," the words are not to be taken strictly, as if he had absolutely no taste at all in any of the foregoing senses; seeing every man living has, more or less, an internal as well as external taste. But they are to be understood in a limited sense. He has no taste, suppose, for metaphysics; he has no discernment, and he has no pleasure in things of this abstracted nature. Another man has no taste for mathematics; he has neither pleasure nor judgment therein. Meantime, the mathematician has no taste either for poetry or music; he does not discern and he does not relish the beauties either of one or the other. But every one of these has some internal taste, how dull soever it be.

12. A dull taste is properly one that is faint and languid, that has no lively perception of its object. But sometimes by a man of a dull taste we mean one that relishes dull things; suppose dull, low compositions in music or poetry, or coarse and worthless pictures. But this is more properly termed a bad taste. So one is hugely pleased with the daubing of a sign-post, another with doggerel verses, and a third with the heavenly music of a pair of bag-pipes. Almost every town and every village supplies us with instances of the same kind. We sometimes call this a false taste, as it supposes things to be excellent which are not. In many it is natural; they have had this wrong turn ever since they were born. But in others it is gradually acquired either by reading or conversation. Then we termed it a vitiated taste. Of this, too, there are abundant instances.

13. On the other hand, he has a good, a just, or a true taste, who discerns and relishes whatever, either in the works of nature or of art, is truly excellent in its kind. This is sometimes termed a correct taste, especially when it is delighted more or less according to the greater or smaller degree of excellence that is in the object. This differs very little, if at all, from a fine taste, especially as Mr. Addison defines it, "that faculty of the mind which discerns with pleasure all the beauties of writing." Should it not be, rather, "which discerns all that is grand or beautiful in the works both of art and nature?"

14. Such a taste as this is much to be desired, and that on many

accounts. It greatly increases those pleasures of life which are not only innocent, but useful. It qualifies us to be of far greater service to our fellow creatures. It is more especially desirable for those whose profession calls them to converse with many, seeing it enables them to be more agreeable, and consequently more profitable, in conversation.

15. But how shall a man know whether he is possessed of this faculty or not? "Let him," says Mr. Addison, "read over the celebrated works of antiquity" (to know whether he has a taste for fine writing), "which have stood the test of so many ages and countries; or those works among the moderns which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If, upon the perusal of such writings, he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner, or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not (as is most common among tasteless readers) that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in them, but that he himself wants the faculty of discerning them."

16. But how can a man acquire this taste? It "must in some degree be born with us; as it often happens that those who have other qualities in perfection are wholly void of this. But though it may in some measure be born with us, there are several means of improving it, without which it will be very imperfect, and of little use to the person that possesses it. The most natural means is to be conversant with the writings of the best authors. One that has any taste either discovers new beauties or receives stronger impressions from the masterly strokes of a great author every time he peruses him."

17. "Conversation with men of genius is another means of improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts to consider any thing in its whole extent. Every man, besides general observations upon an author, forms some that are peculiar to his own way of thinking. So that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own." Besides, if we converse freely with men of taste, and incite them to "open the window in their breast," we may learn to correct whatever is yet amiss in our taste, as well as to supply whatever we or they perceive to be still wanting; all which may be directed to that glorious end, the "pleasing all men for their good unto edification."

THE POWER OF MUSIC.

1. By the power of music I mean its power to affect the hearers, to raise various passions in the human mind. Of this we have very surprising accounts in ancient history. We are told the ancient Greek musicians in particular were able to excite whatever

passions they pleased; to inspire love or hate, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, courage, fury, or despair; yea, to raise these one after another, and to vary the passion just according to the variation of the music.

2. But how is this to be accounted for? No such effects attend the modern music; although it is confessed on all hands that our instruments excel theirs beyond all degrees of comparison. What was their lyre, their instruments of seven or ten strings, compared to our violin? What were any of their pipes to our hautboy or German flute? What, all of them put together, all that were in use two or three thousand-years ago, to our organ? How is it, then, that with this inconceivable advantage the modern music has less power than the ancient?

3. Some have given a very short answer to this, cutting the knot which they could not untie. They have doubted, or affected to doubt, the fact; perhaps have even denied it. But no sensible man will do this, unless he be utterly blinded by prejudice. For it would be denying the faith of all history, seeing no fact is better authenticated. None is delivered down to us by more unquestionable testimony, such as fully satisfies in all other cases. We have, therefore, no more reason to doubt of the power of Timotheus's music than that of Alexander's arms; and we may deny his taking Persepolis, as well as his burning it through that sudden rage which was excited in him by that musician. And the various effects which were successively wrought in his mind (so beautifully described by Dryden, in his "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day") are astonishing instances of the power of a single harp to transport, as it were, the mind out of itself.

4. Nay, we read of an instance, even in modern history, of the power of music not inferior to this. A musician being brought to the King of Denmark and asked whether he could excite any passion, answered in the affirmative, and was commanded to make the trial upon the king himself. Presently the monarch was all in tears; and, upon the musician's changing his mood, he was quickly roused into such fury that, snatching a sword from one of his assistant's hands (for they had purposely removed his own), he immediately killed him, and would have killed all in the room had he not been forcibly withheld.

5. This alone removes all the incredibility of what is related concerning the ancient music. But why is it that modern music in general has no such effect on the hearers? The grand reason seems to be no other than this: the whole nature and design of

music is altered. The ancient composers studied melody alone, the due arrangement of single notes; and it was by melody alone that they wrought such wonderful effects. And as this music was directly calculated to move the passions, so they designed it for this very end. But the modern composers study harmony, which, in the present sense of the word, is quite another thing; namely, a contrast of various notes, opposite to, and yet blended with each other, wherein they,

Now high, now low, pursue the resonant fugue.

Dr. Gregory says, "this harmony has been known in the world little more than two hundred years." Be that as it may, ever since it was introduced, ever since counterpoint has been invented, as it has altered the grand design of music, so it has well nigh destroyed its effects.

6. Some indeed have imagined and attempted to prove that the ancients were acquainted with this. It seems there needs but one single argument to demonstrate the contrary. We have many capital pieces of ancient music that are now in the hands of the curious. Dr. Pepusch, who was well versed in the music of antiquity (perhaps the best of any man in Europe), showed me several large Greek folios which contained many of their musical compositions. Now, is there, or is there not, any counterpoint in these? The learned know there is no such thing. There is not the least trace of it to be found; it is all melody and no harmony.

7. And as the nature of music is thus changed, so is likewise the design of it. Our composers do not aim at moving the passions, but at quite another thing—at varying and contrasting the notes a thousand different ways. What has counterpoint to do with the passions? It is applied to a quite different faculty of the mind; not to our joy or hope or fear, but merely to the ear, to the imagination, or internal sense. And the pleasure it gives is not upon this principle, not by raising any passion whatever. It no more affects the passions than the judgment; both the one and the other lie quite out of its province.

8. Need we any other and can we have any stronger proof of this than those modern overtures, voluntaries, or concertos, which consist altogether of artificial sounds, without any words at all? What have any of the passions to do with these? What has judgment, reason, common sense? Just nothing at all. All these are utterly excluded by delicate, unmeaning sound!

9. In this respect the modern music has no connection with com-

mon sense any more than with the passions. In another it is glaringly, undeniably contrary to common sense; namely, in allowing, yea, appointing, different words to be sung by different persons at the same time. What can be more shocking to a man of understanding than this? Pray, which of those sentences am I to attend to? I can attend to only one sentence at once; and I hear three or four at one and the same instant! And, to complete the matter, this astonishing jargon has found a place even in the worship of God! It runs through (O, pity! O, shame!) the greatest part even of our church music! It is found even in the finest of our anthems and in the most solemn parts of our public worship! Let any impartial, any unprejudiced person say whether there can be a more direct mockery of God.

10. But to return: Is it strange that modern music does not answer the end it is designed for, and which it is in no wise calculated for? It is not possible it should. Had Timotheus "pursued the resonant fugue" his music would have been quite harmless. It would have affected Alexander no more than Bucephalus; the finest city then in the world had not been destroyed; but

Persepolis stares, Cyrique arx alta maneres.

[Persepolis, thou mightst have stood, and the lofty tower of Cyrus.*]

11. It is true the modern music has been sometimes observed to have as powerful effect as the ancient, so that frequently single persons and sometimes numerous assemblies have been seen in a flood of tears. But when was this? Generally, if not always, when a fine solo was sung; when "the sound has been an echo to the sense;" when the music has been extremely simple and inartificial, the composer having attended to melody, not harmony. Then, and then only, the natural power of music to move the passions has appeared. This music was calculated for that end, and effectually answered it.

12. Upon this ground it is that so many persons are so much affected by Scotch or Irish airs. They are composed not according to art, but nature; they are simple in the highest degree. There is no harmony, according to the present sense of the word, therein, but there is much melody. And this is not only heard, but felt by all those who retain their native taste; whose taste is not biassed (I might say corrupted) by attending to counterpoint

[* The line in Virgil, altered by Mr. Wesley as above, is,

"Trojaque nunc stares, Priamique arx alta maneres."

"Old Priam still his empire would enjoy,

And still thy towers had stood, majestic Troy."—Pitt.]

and complicated music. It is this, it is counterpoint, it is harmony (so called) which destroys the power of music. And if ever this should be banished from our composition, if ever we should return to the simplicity and melody of the ancients, then the effects of our music will be as surprising as any that were wrought by theirs; yea, perhaps they will be as much greater as modern instruments are more excellent than those of the ancients.

JOHN WESLEY.

INVERNESS, *June 9, 1779.*

THE MANNER OF EDUCATING CHILDREN.

(*Printed in the year 1783.*)

1. A GENTLEMAN with whom I was conversing a while ago was speaking largely on the manner of educating children. He objected strongly to the bringing them up too strictly, to the giving them more religion than they liked, to the telling them of it too often, or pressing it upon them whether they will or no. He said he never pressed it upon his own children, but only spoke of it occasionally in their hearing; and if they appeared affected, then answered their questions, or perhaps spoke to them directly. He thought that the common methods that are used in those that are called religious schools, of talking about divine things continually, and daily pressing it upon children, did abundantly more harm than good, especially if any severity were used; and concluded with saying that those children who had been trained up in this manner as soon as the restraint was taken off were commonly worse than others.

2. As all this was perfectly new to me, I made little answer for the present; but it put me upon much thought. I knew it was quite agreeable to the sentiments of Rousseau in his *Emilius*, the most empty, silly, injudicious thing that ever a self-conceited infidel wrote. But I knew it was quite contrary to the judgment of the wisest and best men I have known. I thought, If these things are so, how much mischief have we done unawares! How much hurt has Miss Bosanquet (now Mrs. Fletcher) been doing in the world for many years? How much more has Miss Owen done, spoiling twenty children at a time? How much mischief is Miss Bishop likely to do? Perhaps more than even Miss Owen. Above all, how much mischief has been done and is now doing at Kingswood, where (if this hypothesis be true) we are continually ruining fifty children at a time?

3. "But be this as it may, I urge the matter of fact against such an education. The children educated thus are, when grown up, actually worse than other men or women." I doubt the fact; nay, that is not enough, I totally deny it. As frequently as this has been affirmed it is notoriously false. Some few, and very few, of those women that were brought up by Miss Bosanquet or Miss Owen either never were converted to God (perhaps never convinced of sin) or have "made shipwreck of the faith," and, at the same time, of its attendant, a good conscience. And undoubtedly these would be worse than others, than those who had not so grieved the Holy Spirit of God. The same may be said of some of those men that were educated at Kingswood School. If they quenched the Spirit they would be worse than those that never were partakers of it. But this proves nothing, unless it were a general case, which is not by any means true. Many, both of the women who were educated by Miss Bosanquet or Miss Owen and of the men who were educated at Kingswood, are holy in heart and in life, and trust they shall praise God to all eternity that ever they saw those schools.

4. Yet I allow that what is commonly called a religious education frequently does more hurt than good; and that many of the persons who were so educated are sinners above other men; yea, and have contracted an enmity to religion which usually continues all their lives. And this will naturally be the case if either the religion wherein they are instructed or the manner of instructing them be wrong. But in most of those that are termed religious schools there is a grand error either in the former or in the latter instance.

5. With regard to the former, how few are there of those that undertake the education of children who understand the nature of religion, who know what true religion is! some of them supposing it to be barely the doing no harm, the abstaining from outward sin; some, the using the means of grace, saying our prayers, reading good books, and the like; and others, the having a train of right opinions, which is vulgarly called faith. But all these, however common in the world, are gross and capital errors. Unless religion be described as consisting in holy tempers, in the love of God and our neighbor, in humility, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, contentedness in every condition, to sum up all, in the image of God, in the mind that was in Christ, it is no wonder if these that are instructed therein are not better, but worse than other men. For they think they have religion when,

indeed, they have none at all; and so add pride to all their other vices.

6. But suppose those that educate them judge right with regard to the nature of religion, they may still be mistaken with regard to the manner of instilling it into children. They may not have the spirit of government, to which some even good men are utter strangers. They may habitually lean to this or that extreme, of remissness or of severity. And if they either give children too much of their own will, or needlessly and churlishly restrain them; if they either use no punishment at all, or more than is necessary, the leaning either to one extreme or the other may frustrate all their endeavors. In the latter case it will not be strange if religion stink in the nostrils of those that were so educated. They will naturally look upon it as an austere, melancholy thing; and if they think it necessary to salvation they will esteem it a necessary evil, and so put it off as long as possible.

7. But does it follow that we ought not to instill true religion into the minds of children as early as possible? Or, rather, that we should do it with all diligence from the very time that reason dawns, laying line upon line, precept upon precept, as soon and as fast as they are able to bear it? By all means. Scripture, reason, and experience jointly testify that, inasmuch as the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be, we should take all pains and care to counteract this corruption as early as possible. The bias of nature is set the wrong way; education is designed to set it right. This, by the grace of God, is to turn the bias from self-will, pride, anger, revenge, and the love of the world, to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God. And from the moment we perceive any of those evil roots springing up it is our business immediately to check their growth, if we cannot yet root them out. As far as this can be done by mildness, softness, and gentleness, certainly it should be done. But sometimes these methods will not avail, and then we must correct with kind severity. For where tenderness will not remove the fault, "he that spareth the rod spoileth the child." To deny this is to give the lie to the God of truth, and to suppose we can govern better than he. For "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

8. In the name of God, then, and by the authority of his word, let all that have children, from the time they begin to speak or run alone, begin to train them up in the way wherein they should go; to counterwork the corruption of their nature with all pos-

sible assiduity; to do every thing in their power to cure their self-will, pride, and every other wrong temper. Then let them be delivered to instructors (if such can be found) that will tread in the same steps; that will watch over them as immortal spirits who are shortly to appear before God, and who have nothing to do in this world but to prepare to meet him in the clouds, seeing they will be eternally happy if they are ready; if not, eternally miserable.

JOHN WESLEY.

GENIUS.

1. I HAVE for many years desired to see something, long or short, accurately written on the term *genius*. It is a word almost in every one's mouth, and one that is used by abundance of writers; yet, I doubt, it is not well understood by one in a hundred of them that use it. I rejoiced, therefore, to hear that so eminent a writer as Dr. Gerard had published an essay on the subject. But when I read it I was disappointed of my hope; it did not in any degree answer my expectations. The ingenious and very learned author did not seem to understand the term at all; nor could I find one proper definition of it throughout the whole treatise.

2. I hoped, however, to find full satisfaction on the head in Mr. Daff's *Essay on Original Genius*; although I was surprised to observe it had been published above twenty years before the other. But I was disappointed again. Indeed, it undoubtedly contains many judicious remarks. But even here what should have been done in the very beginning is not done at all. I want to know, first of all, What do you mean by *genius*? Give me a definition of it. Pray tell me this before you say any thing more about it. This is common-sense. Without this you may ramble as long as you please, and leave me just as wise as I was.

3. The word *genius* was used by the ancient Romans for a superior being, good or bad, who they supposed attended every one from his birth to his death. But in this sense of the word it has nothing to do with the present question, wherein it means either a quality of the human mind or a man endued with that quality. Thus we say indifferently, He *is* a genius, or *has* a genius. I would here take it in the latter sense, for the quality which denominates a man a genius.

4. It is evident that genius, taken in this sense, is not inven-

tion, although that may possibly bear some relation to it. It is not imagination, although this may be allowed to be one ingredient of it. Much less is it an association of ideas; all these are essentially different from it. So is sensation, on the one hand, and so are memory and judgment on the other; unless by judgment we mean (as many do) strength of understanding. It seems to be an extraordinary capacity of mind—sometimes termed extraordinary talents. This may be more or less extensive; there may be a kind of general genius, or an extraordinary capacity for many things; or a particular genius, an extraordinary capacity for one particular thing; it may be for one particular science, or one particular art. Thus Homer and Milton had a genius, an extraordinary capacity for poetry. Thus Euclid and Archimedes had a genius, an extraordinary capacity for geometry. So Cicero had a genius for oratory, and Sir Isaac Newton for natural philosophy. Thus Raphael and Michael Angelo had a genius, an extraordinary capacity for painting. And so Purcell and Handel (to mention no more) had a genius, an extraordinary capacity for music. Whereas Aristotle, Lord Bacon, and a very few besides seem to have had a universal genius, an extraordinary capacity to excel in whatever they took in hand.

5. It may be allowed that the word is frequently taken in a lower sense. But it has then a word prefixed to it to restrain its signification. So we say, A man has a middling genius, or a little genius. But it is generally taken for an extraordinary capacity, of whatever kind.

6. Genius in philosophy, poetry, and oratory seems to imply a strong and clear understanding, connected with an unusually extensive and lively imagination. In which respect it may truly be said, not only of a poet, but also of an orator and philosopher, *Nascitur, non fit* ("He has this endowment by nature, not by art"). Yet it may be granted that art may exceedingly improve what originally sprung from nature. It may receive assistance, likewise, from the memory (nearly related to the imagination); and also from the passions, which on various occasions enliven and strengthen the imagination.

7. It may be observed I purpose to abstain from using the word reason or judgment, because the word understanding is less equivocal, and I would always use one and the same word to express one and the same idea.

8. Both the writers above mentioned suppose taste also to be essential to genius. And, indeed, it does seem to be, if not an

essential part, yet an essential property of it. Taste is here a figurative word, borrowed from the sense of tasting, whereby we are enabled first to judge of and then to relish our food; so the intellectual taste has a twofold office: it judges and it relishes. In the former respect it belongs to the understanding; in the latter, to the imagination.

9. To sum up all: Perhaps genius may be defined an extraordinary capacity for philosophy, oratory, poetry, or any other art or science, the constituent parts whereof are a strong understanding and a lively imagination, and the essential property a just taste.

JOHN WESLEY.

LAMBETH, *November 8, 1787.*

MEMORY.

THERE is a near relation between memory, reminiscence, and recollection. But what is the difference between them? Wherein do they differ from each other? Is not memory a natural faculty of the mind which is exerted various ways? And does it not exert itself sometimes in simply remembering something in reminiscence or recollection? In simply remembering things the mind of man appears to be rather passive than active. Whether we will or no we remember many things which we have heard or seen, said or done; especially if they were attended with any remarkable pleasure or pain. But in reminiscence, or recalling what is past, the mind appears to be active. Most times at least we may or may not recall them as we please. Recollection seems to imply something more than simple reminiscence; even the studious collecting and gathering up together all the parts of a conversation or transaction which had occurred before, but had in some measure escaped from the memory.

But there is one sort of memory which it seems more difficult to understand than any other. You pronounce or hear a discourse or copy of verses which fixes upon your memory. Afterward you can repeat in your mind the words you spoke or heard, without ever opening your lips or uttering any articulate sound. There is a kind of inward voice (so we may term it for want of a better expression) which, like an echo, not only repeats the same words without the least variation, but with exactly the same accent and the same tone of voice. The same echo repeats any tune you have learned without the least alteration. Now, how is

this done? By what faculty of the mind or the body, or both conjointly? I am as sure of the fact as I am that I am alive. But who is able to account for it? O, how shall we comprehend the ever blessed God when we cannot comprehend ourselves!

JOHN WESLEY.

YARMOUTH, *October 21, 1789.*

REMARKABLE PROVIDENCE.

(Printed in the year 1778.)

THE following letter, written by my mother, gives an account of a very remarkable providence; but it is imperfect with regard to me. That part none but I myself can supply. Her account, wrote to a neighboring clergyman, begins:

“EPWORTH, *August 24, 1709.*

“On Wednesday night, February 9, between the hours of eleven and twelve, some sparks fell from the roof of our house upon one of the children’s (Hetty’s) feet. She immediately ran to our chamber and called us. Mr. Wesley, hearing a cry of fire in the street, started up (as I was very ill he lay in a separate room from me), and, opening his door, found the fire was in his own house. He immediately came to my room and bid me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly and shift for ourselves. Then he ran and burst open the nursery door and called to the maid to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her; the three others in another bed. She snatched up the youngest and bid the rest follow, which the three elder did. When we were got into the hall and were surrounded with flames, Mr. Wesley found he had left the keys of the doors above stairs. He ran up and recovered them a minute before the stair-case took fire. When we opened the street door the strong north-east wind drove the flames in with such violence that none could stand against them. But some of our children got out through the windows, the rest through a little door into the garden. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows, neither could I get to the garden door. I endeavored three times to force my passage through the street door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour for help, and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no further harm than a little scorching my hands and my face.

“When Mr. Wesley had seen the other children safe he heard the child in the nursery cry. He attempted to go up stairs, but they were all on fire and would not bear his weight. Finding it impossible to give any help, he kneeled down in the hall and recommended the soul of the child to God.”

I believe it was just at that time I waked; for I did not cry as they imagined, unless it was afterward. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains and saw streaks

of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed up on a chest which stood near the window; one in the yard saw me and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, "There will not be time; but I have thought of another expedient: here, I will fix myself against the wall; lift a light man and set him on my shoulders." They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the whole roof fell in; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was he cried out, "Come, neighbors, let us kneel down! Let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children. Let the house go; I am rich enough!"

The next day, as he was walking in the garden and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his polyglot Bible on which just those words were legible: *Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me* ("Go; sell all that thou hast, and take up thy cross, and follow me").

A LETTER TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC.

1. You have heard ten thousand stories of us who are commonly called Protestants, of which, if you believe only one in a thousand, you must think very hardly of us. But this is quite contrary to our Lord's rule, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," and has many ill-consequences, particularly this—it inclines us to think hardly of you. Hence, we are on both sides less willing to help one another, and more ready to hurt each other. Hence, brotherly love is utterly destroyed, and each side, looking on the other as monsters, gives way to anger, hatred, malice, to every unkind affection; which have frequently broke out in such inhuman barbarities as are scarce named among the heathens.

2. Now, can nothing be done, even allowing us on both sides to retain our own opinions, for the softening our hearts toward each other, the giving a check to this flood of unkindness, and restoring at least some small degree of love among our neighbors and countrymen? Do not you wish for this? Are you not fully convinced that malice, hatred, revenge, bitterness, whether in us or in you, in our hearts or yours, are an abomination to the Lord? Be our opinions right or be they wrong, these tempers are undeniably wrong. They are the broad road that leads to destruction, to the nethermost hell.

3. I do not suppose all the bitterness is on your side. I know there is too much on our side also ; so much that I fear many Protestants (so called) will be angry at me, too, for writing to you in this manner, and will say, "It is showing you too much favor; you deserve no such treatment at our hands."

4. But I think you do. I think you deserve the tenderest regard I can show, were it only because the same God hath raised you and me from the dust of the earth, and has made us both capable of loving and enjoying him to eternity; were it only because the Son of God has bought you and me with his own blood. How much more if you are a person fearing God (as without question many of you are), and studying to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man?

5. I shall, therefore, endeavor, as mildly and inoffensively as I can, to remove in some measure the ground of your unkindness by plainly declaring what our belief and what our practice is, that you may see we are not altogether such monsters as, perhaps, you imagined us to be.

A true Protestant may express his belief in these or the like words:

6. As I am assured that there is an infinite and independent Being, and that it is impossible there should be more than one, so I believe that this One God is the Father of all things, especially of angels and men ; that he is in a peculiar manner the Father of those whom he regenerates by his Spirit, whom he adopts in his Son, as co-heirs with him, and crowns with an eternal inheritance; but in a still higher sense, the Father of his only Son, whom he hath begotten from eternity.

I believe this Father of all not only to be able to do whatsoever pleaseth him, but also to have an eternal right of making what and when and how he pleaseth, and of possessing and disposing of all that he has made ; and that he of his own goodness created heaven and earth, and all that is therein.

7. I believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Saviour of the world, the Messiah so long foretold; that, being anointed with the Holy Ghost, he was a Prophet, revealing to us the whole will of God; that he was a Priest, who gave himself a sacrifice for sin, and still makes intercession for transgressors; that he is a King, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and will reign till he has subdued all things to himself.

I believe he is the proper, natural Son of God, God of God, very God of very God ; and that he is the Lord of all, having absolute,

supreme, universal dominion over all things; but more peculiarly our Lord, who believe in him both by conquest, purchase, and voluntary obligation.

I believe that he was made man, joining the human nature with the divine in one person; being conceived by the singular operation of the Holy Ghost, and born of the blessed Virgin Mary, who, as well after as before she brought him forth, continued a pure and unspotted virgin.

I believe he suffered inexpressible pains both of body and soul, and at last death, even the death of the cross, at the time that Pontius Pilate governed Judea under the Roman emperor; that his body was then laid in the grave, and his soul went to the place of separate spirits; that the third day he rose again from the dead; that he ascended into heaven; where he remains in the midst of the throne of God, in the highest power and glory, as Mediator till the end of the world, as God to all eternity; that, in the end, he will come down from heaven to judge every man according to his works, both those who shall be then alive and all who have died before that day.

8. I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy in himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us; enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions—purifying and sanctifying our souls and bodies to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.

9. I believe that Christ by his apostles gathered unto himself a Church, to which he has continually added such as shall be saved; that this catholic—that is, universal—Church, extending to all nations and all ages, is holy in all its members who have fellowship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that they have fellowship with the holy angels, who constantly minister to these heirs of salvation, and with all the living members of Christ on earth, as well as all who are departed in his faith and fear.

10. I believe God forgives all the sins of them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel; and that at the last day all men shall rise again, every one with his own body.

I believe that as the unjust shall, after their resurrection, be tormented in hell forever, so the just shall enjoy inconceivable happiness in the presence of God to all eternity.

11. Now, is there any thing wrong in this? Is there any one point which you do not believe as well as we?

But you think we ought to believe more. We will not now enter into the dispute. Only let me ask, If a man sincerely believes thus much, and practices accordingly, can any one possibly persuade you to think that such a man shall perish everlastingly?

12. "But does he practice accordingly?" If he does not, we grant all his faith will not save him. And this leads me to show you, in few and plain words, what the practice of a true Protestant is.

I say, a *true Protestant*; for I disclaim all common swearers, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards; all whoremongers, liars, cheats, extortioners; in a word, all that live in open sin. These are no Protestants; they are no Christians at all. Give them their own name; they are open heathens. They are the curse of the nation, the bane of society, the shame of mankind, the scum of the earth.

13. A true Protestant believes in God, has a full confidence in his mercy, fears him with a filial fear, and loves him with all his soul. He worships God in spirit and in truth, in every thing gives him thanks; calls upon him with his heart as well as his lips, at all times and in all places; honors his holy name and his word, and serves him truly all the days of his life.

Now, do not you yourself approve of this? Is there any one point you can condemn? Do not you practice as well as approve of it? Can you ever be happy if you do not? Can you ever expect true peace in this or glory in the world to come if you do not believe in God through Christ? if you do not thus fear and love God? My dear friend, consider: I am not persuading you to leave or change your religion, but to follow after that fear and love of God without which all religion is vain. I say not a word to you about your opinions or outward manner of worship. But I say all worship is an abomination to the Lord, unless you worship him in spirit and in truth; with your heart as well as your lips; with your spirit, and with your understanding also. Be your form of worship what it will, but in every thing give him thanks; else it is all but lost labor. Use whatever outward observances you please, but put your whole trust in him; but honor his holy name and his word, and serve him truly all the days of your life.

14. Again: A true Protestant loves his neighbor—that is, every man, friend or enemy, good or bad, as himself, as he loves his own soul, as Christ loved us. And as Christ laid down his life for us, so is he ready to lay down his life for his brethren. He shows this love by doing to all men, in all points, as he would they should

do unto him. He loves, honors, and obeys his father and mother, and helps them to the uttermost of his power. He honors and obeys the king, and all that are put in authority under him. He cheerfully submits to all his governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters. He behaves lowly and reverently to all his betters. He hurts nobody by word or deed. He is true and just in all his dealings. He bears no malice or hatred in his heart. He abstains from all evil speaking, lying, and slandering; neither is guile found in his mouth. Knowing his body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, he keeps it in sobriety, temperance, and chastity. He does not desire other men's goods, but is content with that he hath; labors to get his own living, and to do the whole will of God in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call him.

15. Have you any thing to reprove in this? Are you not herein even as he? If not (tell the truth), are you not condemned both by God and your own conscience? Can you fall short of any one point hereof without falling short of being a Christian?

Come, my brother, and let us reason together. Are you right if you only love your friend and hate your enemy? Do not even the heathens and publicans so? You are called to love your enemies, to bless them that curse you, and to pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. But are you not disobedient to the heavenly calling? Does your tender love to all men, not only the good, but also the evil and unthankful, approve you the child of your Father which is in heaven? Otherwise, whatever you believe and whatever you practice, you are of your father the devil. Are you ready to lay down your life for your brethren? And do you do unto all as you would they should do unto you? If not, do not deceive your own soul. You are but a heathen still. Do you love, honor, and obey your father and mother, and help them to the utmost of your power? Do you honor and obey all in authority? all your governors, spiritual pastors, and masters? Do you behave lowly and reverently to all your betters? Do you hurt nobody, by word or deed? Are you true and just in all your dealings? Do you take care to pay whatever you owe? Do you feel no malice or envy or revenge, no hatred or bitterness to any man? If you do it is plain you are not of God; for all these are the tempers of the devil. Do you speak the truth from your heart to all men, and that in tenderness and love? Are you "an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile?" Do you keep your body in sobriety, temperance, and chastity, as

knowing it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that, if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy? Have you learned in every state wherein you are therewith to be content? Do you labor to get your own living, abhorring idleness as you abhor hell-fire? The devil tempts other men, but an idle man tempts the devil. An idle man's brain is the devil's shop, where he is continually working mischief. Are you not slothful in business? Whatever your hand finds to do, do you do it with your might? And do you do all as unto the Lord, as a sacrifice unto God, acceptable in Christ Jesus?

This, and this alone, is the old religion. This is true primitive Christianity. O, when shall it spread over all the earth! When shall it be found both in us and you? Without waiting for others, let each of us, by the grace of God, amend one.

16. Are we not thus far agreed? Let us thank God for this, and receive it as a fresh token of his love. But if God still loveth us, we ought also to love one another. We ought, without this endless jangling about opinions, to provoke one another to love and to good works. Let the points wherein we differ stand aside; here are enough wherein we agree, enough to be the ground of every Christian temper, and of every Christian action.

O, brethren, let us not still fall out by the way! I hope to see you in heaven. And if I practice the religion above described you dare not say I shall go to hell. You cannot think so. None can persuade you to it. Your own conscience tells you the contrary. Then if we cannot as yet think alike in all things, at least we may love alike. Herein we cannot possibly do amiss. For one point none can doubt a moment—"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

17. In the name, then, and in the strength of God, let us resolve, first, not to hurt one another; to do nothing unkind or unfriendly to each other, nothing which we would not have done to ourselves. Rather let us endeavor after every instance of a kind, friendly, and Christian behavior toward each other.

Let us resolve, secondly, God being our helper, to speak nothing harsh or unkind of each other. The sure way to avoid this is to say all the good we can both of and to one another. In all our conversation, either with or concerning each other, to use only the language of love; to speak with all softness and tenderness; with the most endearing expression which is consistent with truth and sincerity.

Let us, thirdly, resolve to harbor no unkind thought, no un-

friendly temper toward each other. Let us lay the ax to the root of the tree ; let us examine all that rises in our heart, and suffer no disposition there which is contrary to tender affection. Then shall we easily refrain from unkind actions and words when the very root of bitterness is cut up.

Let us, fourthly, endeavor to help each other on in whatever we are agreed leads to the kingdom. So far as we can, let us always rejoice to strengthen each other's hands in God. Above all, let us each take heed to himself (since each must give an account of himself to God) that he fall not short of the religion of love ; that he be not condemned in that he himself approveth. O, let you and I (whatever others do) press on to the prize of our high calling ! that, being justified by faith, we may have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; that we may rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement ; that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Let us count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord ; being ready for him to suffer the loss of all things, and counting them but dung, that we may win Christ.

I am your affectionate servant, for Christ's sake.

DUBLIN, *July 18, 1749.*

POPERY CALMLY CONSIDERED.

TO THE READER.

In the following tract I propose, first, to lay down and examine the chief doctrines of the Church of Rome. Secondly, to show the natural tendency of a few of those doctrines ; and that with all the plainness and all the calmness I can.

SECTION I.

OF THE CHURCH, AND THE RULE OF FAITH.

1. THE papists judge it necessary to salvation to be subject to the pope as the one visible head of the Church.

But we read in Scripture that Christ is the Head of the Church, "from whom the whole body is fitly joined together" (Col. ii, 19). The Scripture does not mention any visible head of the Church, much less does it mention the pope as such ; and least of all does it say that it is necessary to salvation to be subject to him.

2. The papists say, The pope is Christ's vicar, St. Peter's successor, and has the supreme power on earth over the whole Church.

We answer, Christ gave no such power to St. Peter himself. He

gave no apostle pre-eminence over the rest. Yea, St. Paul was so far from acknowledging St. Peter's supremacy that he withstood him to the face (Gal. ii, 11), and asserted himself "not to be behind the chief of the apostles."

Neither is it certain that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome; no, nor that he ever was there.

But they say, "Is not Rome the mother, and therefore the mistress of all Churches?"

We answer, No. "The word of the Lord went forth from Jerusalem." There the Church began. She, therefore, not the Church of Rome, is the mother of all Churches.

The Church of Rome, therefore, has no right to require any person to believe what she teaches on her sole authority.

3. St. Paul says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The Scripture, therefore, being delivered by men divinely inspired, is a rule sufficient of itself. So it neither needs nor is capable of any farther addition.

Yet the papists add tradition to Scripture, and require it to be received with equal veneration. By traditions they mean, "such points of faith and practice as have been delivered down in the Church from hand to hand without writing." And for many of these they have no more Scripture to show than the Pharisees had for their traditions.

4. The Church of Rome not only adds tradition to Scripture, but several entire books; namely, Tobit and Judith, the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the two books of Maccabees, and a new part of Esther and of Daniel; "which whole books," says the Church of Rome, "whoever rejects, let him be accursed."

We answer, We cannot but reject them. We dare not receive them as part of the Holy Scriptures. For none of these books were received as such by the Jewish Church, "to whom were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii, 2); neither by the ancient Christian Church, as appears from the sixtieth canon of the Council of Laodicea; wherein is a catalogue of the books of Scriptures without any mention of these.

5. As the Church of Rome, on the one hand, adds to the Scripture, so, on the other hand, she forbids the people to read them. Yea, they are forbid to read so much as a summary or historical compendium of them in their own tongue.

Nothing can be more inexcusable than this. Even under the

law the people had the Scriptures in a tongue vulgarly known; and they were not only permitted, but required, to read them; yea, to be constantly conversant therein (Deut. vi, 6, etc.). Agreeable to this, our Lord commands to search the Scriptures, and St. Paul directs that his epistle be read in all the churches (1 Thess. v, 27). Certainly this epistle was wrote in a tongue which all of them understood.

But they say, "If people in general were to read the Bible, it would do them more harm than good." Is it any honor to the Bible to speak thus? But supposing some did abuse it, is this any sufficient reason for forbidding others to use it? Surely, no. Even in the days of the apostles there were some "unstable and ignorant men," who wrested both Paul's epistles and the other Scriptures, "to their own destruction." But did any of the apostles, on this account, forbid other Christians to read them? You know they did not. They only cautioned them not to be "led away by the error of the wicked." And certainly the way to prevent this is not to keep the Scriptures from them (for "they were written for our learning"), but to exhort all to the diligent perusal of them, lest they should "err, not knowing the Scriptures."

6. "But seeing the Scripture may be misunderstood, how are we to judge of the sense of it? How can we know the sense of any Scripture, but from the sense of the Church?"

We answer: (1) The Church of Rome is no more the Church in general than the Church of England is. It is only one particular branch of the catholic, or universal, Church of Christ, which is the whole body of believers in Christ scattered over the whole earth. (2) We therefore see no reason to refer any matter in dispute to the Church of Rome more than any other Church, especially as we know neither the bishop nor the Church of Rome is any more infallible than ourselves. (3) In all cases the Church is to be judged by the Scripture, not the Scripture by the Church. And Scripture is the best expounder of Scripture. The best way, therefore, to understand it is carefully to compare Scripture with Scripture, and thereby learn the true meaning of it.

SECTION II.

OF REPENTANCE AND OBEDIENCE.

1. The Church of Rome teaches that "the deepest repentance or contrition avails nothing without confession to a priest; but that, with this, attrition, or the fear of hell, is sufficient to reconcile us to God."

This is very dangerously wrong and flatly contrary to Scripture; for the Scripture says, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psa. li, 17). And the same texts which make contrition sufficient without confession show that attrition, even with it, is insufficient. Now, as the former doctrine of the insufficiency of contrition without confession makes that necessary which God has not made necessary, so the latter, of the sufficiency of attrition with confession, makes that unnecessary which God has made necessary.

2. The Church of Rome teaches that "good works truly merit eternal life."

This is flatly contrary to what our Saviour teaches: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke xvii, 10). A command to do it, grace to obey that command, "and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" must forever cut off all pretense of merit from all human obedience.

3. That a man may truly and properly merit hell we grant; although he never can merit heaven. But if he does merit hell, yet, according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, he need never go there. For "the Church has power to grant him an indulgence, which remits both the fault and the punishment."

Some of these indulgences extend only to so many days, some to so many weeks, but others extend to a man's whole life; and this is called a plenary indulgence.

These indulgences are to be obtained by going pilgrimages, by reciting certain prayers, or (which is abundantly the most common way) by paying the stated price of it.

Now, can any thing under heaven be imagined more horrid, more execrable than this? Is not this a manifest prostitution of religion to the basest purposes? Can any possible method be contrived to make sin more cheap and easy? Even the popish Council of Trent acknowledged this abuse, and condemned it in strong terms; but they did not in any degree remove the abuse which they acknowledged. Nay, two of the popes under whom the council sat—Pope Paul III. and Julius III.—proceeded in the same course with their predecessors, or rather exceeded them; for they granted to such of the Fraternity of the Holy Altar as visited the Church of St. Hilary of Chartres, during the six weeks of Lent, seven hundred and seventy-five thousand seven hundred years of pardon.

4. This miserable doctrine of indulgences is founded upon another bad doctrine, that of works of supererogation; for the Church of Rome teaches that there is "an overplus of merit in the saints, and that this is a treasure committed to the Church's custody, to be disposed as she sees meet."

But this doctrine is utterly irreconcilable with the following Scriptures: "The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (Rom. viii, 18), and "Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God" (2 Cor. iv, 17). For if there be no comparison betwixt the reward and the sufferings, then no one has merit to transfer to another; and if every one must give an account of himself to God, then no one can be saved by the merit of another. But suppose there were a superabundance of merits in the saints, yet we have no need of them, seeing there is such an infinite value in what Christ hath done and suffered for us; seeing he alone hath "by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x, 14).

5. But where do the souls of those go after death who die in a state of grace, but yet are not sufficiently purged from sin to enter into heaven?"

The Church of Rome says: "They go to purgatory, a purging fire near hell, where they continue till they are purged from all their sins, and so made meet for heaven."

Nay, that those who die in a state of grace go into a place of torment, in order to be purged in the other world, is utterly contrary to Scripture. Our Lord said to the penitent thief upon the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Now, if a purgation in another world were necessary for any, he that did not repent and believe till the last hour of his life might well be supposed to need it, and consequently ought to have been sent to purgatory, not to paradise.

6. Very near akin to that of purgatory is the doctrine of *Limbus Patrum* [Limbo of the Fathers]. For the Church of Rome teaches that "before the death and resurrection of Christ the souls of good men departed were detained in a certain place, called *Limbus Patrum*, which is the uppermost part of hell. "The lowermost," they say, "is the place of the damned; next above this is purgatory, next to that *Limbus Infantum*, or the place where the souls of infants are."

It might suffice to say there is not one word of all this in Scripture. But there is much against it. We read that Elijah

was taken up into heaven (2 Kings ii, 11), and he and Moses “appeared in glory” (Luke ix, 31). And Abraham is represented as in paradise (Luke xvi, 22), the blessed abode of good men in the other world. Therefore, none of these were in the *Limbus Patrum*. Consequently, if the Bible is true, there is no such place.

SECTION III.

OF DIVINE WORSHIP.

1. The service of the Roman Church consists of prayers to God, angels, and saints ; of lessons, and of confessions of faith.

All their service is every-where performed in the Latin tongue, which is nowhere vulgarly understood. Yea, it is required ; and a curse is denounced against all those who say it ought to be performed in the vulgar tongue.

This irrational and unscriptural practice destroys the great end of public worship. The end of this is the honor of God in the edification of the Church. The means to this end is to have the service so performed as may inform the mind and increase devotion. But this cannot be done by that service which is performed in an unknown tongue.

What St. Paul judged of this is clear from his own words : “ If I know not the meaning of the voice ” (of him that speaks in a public assembly), “ he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me ” (1 Cor. xiv, 11). Again: “ If thou shalt bless with the spirit ” (by the gift of an unknown tongue), “ how shall the unlearned say Amen ? ” (Verse 16.) How can the people be profited by the lessons, answer at the responses, be devout in their prayers, confess their faith in the creeds when they do not understand what is read, prayed, and confessed ? It is manifest, then, that the having any part of divine worship in an unknown tongue is as flatly contrary to the word of God as it is to reason.

2. From the manner of worship in the Church of Rome proceed we to the objects of it. Now, the Romanists worship, besides angels, the Virgin Mary and other saints. They teach that angels, in particular, are to be “ worshiped, invoked, and prayed to.” And they have litanies and other prayers composed for that purpose.

In flat opposition to all this the words of our Saviour are, “ Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” To evade this they say, “ The worship we give to angels is not the same kind with that which we give to God. Vain

words! What kind of worship is peculiar to God if prayer is not? Surely, God alone can receive all our prayers and give what we pray for. We honor the angels, as they are God's ministers, but we dare not worship or pray to them; it is what they themselves refuse and abhor. So, when St. John fell down at the feet of the angel to worship him, he said, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant: worship God" (Rev. xix, 10).

3. The Romanists also worship saints. They pray to them as their intercessors, they confess their sins to them, they offer incense and make vows to them; yea, they venerate their very images and relics.

Now, all this is directly contrary to Scripture. And, first, the worshipping them as intercessors. For, as "there is but one God to us, though there are gods many and lords many" (1 Cor. viii, 5, 6), so, according to Scripture, there is but one Intercessor or Mediator to us. And suppose the angels or saints intercede for us in heaven, yet may we no more worship them than because "there are gods many on earth" we may worship them as we do the true God.

The Romanists allow, "There is only one Mediator of redemption," but say, "There are many mediators of intercession." We answer: The Scripture knows no difference between a mediator of intercession and of redemption. He alone "who died and rose again" for us makes intercession for us at the right hand of God. And he alone has a right to our prayers, nor dare we address them to any other.

4. The worship which the Romanists give to the Virgin Mary is beyond what they give either to angels or other saints. In one of their public offices they say, "Command thy Son by the right of a mother." They pray to her to "loose the bands of the guilty, to bring light to the blind, to make them mild and chaste, and to cause their hearts to burn in love to Christ."

Such worship as this cannot be given to any creature without gross, palpable idolatry. We honor the blessed Virgin as the mother of the holy Jesus, and a person of eminent piety; but we dare not give worship to her, for it belongs to God alone.

Meantime, we cannot but wonder at the application which the Church of Rome continually makes to her of whose acts on earth the Scripture so sparingly speaks. And it says nothing of what they so pompously celebrate, her assumption into heaven, or of her exaltation to a throne above angels or archangels. It says nothing of her being "the mother of grace and mercy, the

queen of the gate of heaven," or of her "power to destroy all heresies," and bring "all things to all."

5. The Romanists pay a regard to the relics of the saints also, which is a kind of worship. By relics they mean the bodies of the saints, or any remains of them, or particular things belonging or relating to them when they were alive, as an arm or thigh, bones or ashes, or the place where or the things by which they suffered. They venerate these in order to obtain the help of the saints. And they believe "by these many benefits are conferred on mankind ; that by these relics of the saints the sick have been cured, the dead raised, and devils cast out."

We read of good King Hezekiah that "he brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made" (2 Kings xviii, 4). And the reason was because the children of Israel burnt incense to it. By looking up to this the people bitten by the fiery serpents had been healed. And it was preserved from generation to generation as a memorial of that divine operation. Yet, when it was abused to idolatry, he ordered it to be broke in pieces. And were these true relics of the saints, and did they truly work these miracles, yet that would be no sufficient cause for the worship that is given them. Rather, this worship would be a good reason, according to Hezekiah's practice, for giving them a decent interment.

6. Let us next consider what reverence the Church of Rome requires to be given to images and pictures. She requires "to kiss them, to uncover the head, to fall down before them, and to use all such postures of worship as they would do to the persons represented, if present." And, accordingly, "the priest is to direct the people to them, that they may be worshiped." They say, indeed, that, in falling down before the image, they "worship the saint or angel whom it represents." We answer : (1) We are absolutely forbidden in Scripture to worship saints or angels themselves. (2) We are expressly forbidden "to fall down and worship any image or likeness of any thing in heaven or earth," whomsoever it may represent. This, therefore, is flat idolatry, directly contrary to the commandment of God.

7. Such, likewise, without all possibility of evasion, is the worship they pay to the cross. They pray that God may make the wood of the cross to "be the stability of faith, an increase of good works, the redemption of souls." They use all expressions of outward adoration, as kissing and falling down before it. They pray directly to it to "increase grace in the ungodly, and

blot out the sins of the guilty." Yea, they give *latria* to it. And this they themselves say "is the sovereign worship that is due only to God."

But, indeed, they have no authority of Scripture for their distinction between *latria* and *dulia*, the former of which they say is due to God alone, the latter that which is due to saints. But here they have forgotten their own distinction. For although they own *latria* is due only to God, yet they do, in fact, give it to the cross. This, then, by their own account, is flat idolatry.

8. And so it is to represent the blessed Trinity by pictures and images, and to worship them. Yet these are made in every Romish country, and recommended to the people to be worshiped ; although there is nothing more expressly forbidden in Scripture than to make any image or representation of God. God himself never appeared in any bodily shape. The representation of "the Ancient of days," mentioned in Daniel, was a mere prophetic figure, and did no more literally belong to God than the eyes or ears that are ascribed to him in Scripture.

SECTION IV.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. The Church of Rome says, "A sacrament is a sensible thing, instituted by God himself as a sign and a means of grace.

"The sacraments are seven : Baptism, confirmation, the Lord's Supper, penance extreme unction, orders, and marriage.

"The parts of a sacrament are the matter, and the form, or words of consecration. So in baptism the matter is water ; the form, 'I baptize thee,' " etc.

On this we remark : Peter Lombard lived about one thousand one hundred and forty years after Christ. And he was the first that ever determined the sacraments to be seven. St. Austin (a greater than he) positively affirms "that there are but two of divine institution."

Again : To say that a sacrament consists of matter and form, and yet either has no form, as confirmation and extreme unction (neither of which is ever pretended to have any form of words instituted by God himself), or has neither matter nor form, as penance or marriage, he is to make them sacraments and no sacraments. For they do not answer that definition of a sacrament which themselves have given.

2. However, they teach that "all these seven confer grace *ex opere operato*, by the work itself, on all such as do not put an obstruction." Nay, it is not enough that we do not put an

obstruction. In order to our receiving grace there is also required previous instruction, true repentance, and a degree of faith ; and even then the grace does not spring merely *ex opere operato* : it does not proceed from the mere elements, or the words spoken, but from the blessing of God, in consequence of his promise to such as are qualified for it.

Equally erroneous is that doctrine of the Church of Rome that “in order to the validity of any sacrament it is absolutely necessary the person who administers it should do it with a holy intention.” For it follows that, wherever there is not this intention, the sacrament is null and void. And so there is no certainty whether the priest, so called, be a real priest ; for who knows the intention of him that ordained him ? And if he be not, all his ministrations are, of course, null and void. But if he be, can I be sure that his intention was holy in administering the baptism or the Lord’s Supper ? And if it was not, they are no sacraments at all, and all our attendance on them is lost labor.

3. So much for the sacraments in general. Let us now proceed to particulars :

“Baptism,” say the Romanists, “may, in case of necessity, be administered by women ; yea, by Jews, infidels, or heretics.” No ; our Lord gave this commission only to the apostles and their successors in the ministry.

The ceremonies which the Romanists use in baptism are these :

Before baptism, (1) Chrism—that is, oil mixed with water is to be consecrated. (2) Exorcism—that is, the priest is to blow in the face of the child, saying, “Go out of him, Satan !” (3) He crosses the forehead, eyes, breast, and several other parts of the body. (4) He puts exorcised salt into his mouth, saying, “Take the salt of wisdom.” (5) He puts spittle in the palm of his left hand, puts the forefinger of his right hand into it, and anoints the child’s nose and ears therewith, who is then brought to the water.

After baptism, first, he anoints the top of the child’s head with chrism as a token of salvation ; secondly, he puts on him a white garment in token of his innocence ; and, thirdly, he puts a lighted candle into his hand in token of the light of faith.

Now, what can any man of understanding say in defense of these idle ceremonies, utterly unknown in the primitive Church as well as unsupported by Scripture ? Do they add dignity to the ordinance of God ? Do they not rather make it contemptible ?

4. The matter of confirmation is the chrism, which is an oint-

ment consecrated by the bishop. The form is the words he uses in crossing the forehead with the chrism; namely, "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Then the person confirmed, setting his right foot on the right foot of his godfather, is to have his head bound with a clean headband, which, after some days, is to be taken off, and reserved till the next Ash-Wednesday, to be then burnt to holy ashes.

The Roman Catechism says: "Sacraments cannot be instituted by any beside God." But it must be allowed Christ did not institute confirmation; therefore, it is no sacrament at all.

5. We come now to one of the grand doctrines of the Church of Rome—that which regards the Lord's Supper. This, therefore, we would wish to consider with the deepest attention. They say, "In the Lord's Supper whole Christ is really, truly, and substantially contained; God-Man, body and blood, bones and nerves, under the appearance of bread and wine."

They attempt to prove it thus: "Our Lord himself says, 'This is my body.' Therefore, upon consecration there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the whole substance of Christ's body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood; and this we term transubstantiation.

"Yet we must not suppose that Christ is broken when the host, or consecrated bread, is broken; because there is whole and entire Christ, under the species of every particle of bread, and under the species of every drop of wine."

We answer: No such change of the bread into the body of Christ can be inferred from his words, "This is my body." For it is not said, "This is *changed* into my body," but, "This *is* my body;" which, if it were to be taken literally, would rather prove the substance of the bread to be his body. But that they are not to be taken literally is manifest from the words of St. Paul, who calls it bread, not only before, but likewise after the consecration (1 Cor. x, 17; xi, 26-28). Here we see that what was called his body was bread at the same time. And accordingly these elements are called by the fathers "the images, the symbols, the figure of Christ's body and blood."

Scripture and antiquity, then, are flatly against transubstantiation. And so are our very senses. Now, our Lord himself appealed to the senses of his disciples: "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke xxiv, 39). Take away the testimony of our senses, and there is no discerning a body from a spirit. But if we believe transubstantiation we take away the testimony of all our senses.

And we give up our reason, too; for if every particle of the host is as much the whole body of Christ as the whole host is before it is divided, then a whole may be divided, not into parts, but into wholes. For divide and subdivide it over and over, and it is whole still! It is whole before the division, whole in the division, whole after the division! Such nonsense, absurdity, and self-contradiction all over is the doctrine of transubstantiation!

6. An evil practice attending this evil doctrine is the depriving the laity of the cup in the Lord's Supper. It is acknowledged by all that our Lord instituted and delivered this sacrament in both kinds, giving the wine as well as the bread to all that partook of it; and that it continued to be so delivered in the Church of Rome for above a thousand years. And yet, notwithstanding this, the Church of Rome now forbids the people to drink of the cup! A more insolent and barefaced corruption cannot easily be conceived!

Another evil practice in the Church of Rome, utterly unheard of in the ancient Church, is that when there is none to receive the Lord's Supper the priest communicates alone. (Indeed, it is not properly to communicate when one only receives it.) This, likewise, is an absolute innovation in the Church of God.

But the greatest abuse of all in the Lord's Supper is the worshipping the consecrated bread. And this the Church of Rome not only practices, but positively enjoins. These are her words: "The same sovereign worship which is due to God is due to the host. Adore it; pray to it. And whosoever holds it unlawful so to do, let him be accursed."

The Romanists themselves grant that if Christ is not corporally present in the Lord's Supper, this is idolatry. And that he is not corporally present anywhere but in heaven, we learn from Acts i, 11; iii, 21. Thither he went, and there he will continue, "till the time of the restitution of all things."

7. Consider we now what the Romanists hold concerning the sacrament of penance.

"The matter of the sacrament of penance is contrition, confession, and satisfaction; the form, 'I absolve thee.'"

We object to this. You say, "The matter of a sacrament is something sensible," perceivable by our senses. But if so penance is not a sacrament. For surely contrition is not something perceivable by the outward senses!

Again: They say, "Confession is a particular discovery of all mortal sins to a

priest, with all their circumstances, as far as they can be called to mind; without which there can be no forgiveness or salvation."

We answer: Although it is often of use to confess our sins to a spiritual guide, yet to make confessing to a priest necessary to forgiveness and salvation is "teaching for doctrines the commandment of men." And to make it necessary in all cases is to lay a dangerous snare both for the confessor and the confessed.

They go on: "The sentence pronounced by the priest in absolution is pronounced by the Judge himself. All the sins of the sinner are thereby pardoned, and an entrance opened into heaven."

We cannot allow it. We believe the absolution pronounced by the priest is only declarative and conditional. For judicially to pardon sin and absolve the sinner is a power God has reserved to himself.

Once more: You say, "Satisfaction is a compensation made to God by alms, etc., for all offenses committed against him."

We answer: (1) It cannot be that we should satisfy God by any of our works. For, (2) nothing can make satisfaction to him but the obedience and death of his Son.

8. We proceed to what they call "the sacrament of extreme unction." "The matter," they say, "of extreme unction is oil consecrated by the bishop, and applied to the eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, and reins of a person supposed to be near death." The form is: "By this holy anointing, God pardon thee for whatever thou hast offended by the eyes, ears, mouth, or touch."

We reply: When the apostles were sent forth "they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark vi, 13); using this as a sign of the miraculous cures to be wrought. And St. James accordingly directs: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (v, 14, 15). But what has this to do with the extreme unction of the Church of Rome? In the first Church this anointing was a mere rite; in the Church of Rome it is made a sacrament! It was used in the first Church for the body; it is used in the Church of Rome for the soul; it was used then for the recovery of the sick; now, for those only that are thought past recovery. It is easy, therefore, to see that the Romish extreme unction has no foundation in Scripture.

9. We are now to consider what the Church of Rome delivers

concerning ordination. "This," says she, "is properly a sacrament. He that denies it, let him be accursed."

"The orders received in the Church of Rome are seven: the priest, the deacon, the subdeacon, the acolythus, to carry the candle; the exorcist, to cast out devils; the reader, and door-keeper."

On this we observe: It is not worth disputing whether ordination should be called a sacrament or not. Let the word then pass. But we object to the thing; there is no divine authority for any order under a deacon. Much less is there any scriptural authority for the forms of conjuration prescribed to the exorcists, or for the rites prescribed in exorcising not only men, women, and children, but likewise houses, cattle, milk, butter, or fruits said to be infested with the devil.

10. The next of their sacraments, so called, is marriage; concerning which they pronounce, "Marriage is truly and properly a sacrament. He that denies it so to be, let him be accursed."

We answer: In one sense it may be so. For St. Austin says, "Signs, when applied to religious things, are called sacraments." In this large sense he calls the sign of the cross a sacrament; and others give this name to washing the feet. But it is not a sacrament according to the Romish definition of the word; for it no more "confers grace" than washing the feet or signing with the cross.

A more dangerous error in the Church of Rome is the forbidding the clergy to marry. "Those that are married may not be admitted into orders; those that are admitted may not marry; and those that, being admitted, do marry, are to be separated."

The apostle, on the contrary, says, "Marriage is honorable in all" (Heb. xiii, 4); and accuses those who "forbid to marry" of teaching "doctrines of devils." How lawful it was for the clergy to marry, his directions concerning it show (1 Tim. iv, 1, 3). And how convenient, yea, necessary, in many cases it is, clearly appears from the innumerable mischiefs which have in all ages followed the prohibition of it in the Church of Rome; which so many wise and good men, even of her own communion, have lamented.

I have now fairly stated and calmly considered most of the particular doctrines of the Church of Rome. Permit me to add a few considerations of a more general nature.

That many members of that Church have been holy men, and that many are so now, I firmly believe. But I do not know if any of them that are dead were more holy than many Protest-

ants who are now with God; yea, than some of our own country, who were very lately removed to Abraham's bosom. To instance only in one (whom I mention the rather because an account of his life is extant): I do not believe that many of them of the same age were more holy than Thomas Walsh. And I doubt if any among them living now are more holy than several Protestants now alive.

But be this as it may: However, by the tender mercies of God, many members of the Church of Rome have been, and are now, holy men, notwithstanding their principles; yet I fear many of their principles have a natural tendency to undermine holiness; greatly to hinder, if not utterly to destroy, the essential branches of it, to destroy the love of God, and the love of our neighbor, with all justice and mercy and truth.

I wish it were possible to lay all prejudice aside, and to consider this calmly and impartially. I begin with the love of God, the fountain of all that holiness without which we cannot see the Lord. And what is it that has a more natural tendency to destroy this than idolatry? Consequently, every doctrine which leads to idolatry naturally tends to destroy it. But so does a very considerable part of the avowed doctrine of the Church of Rome. Her doctrine touching the worship of angels, of saints, the Virgin Mary in particular, touching the worship of images, of relics, of the cross, and, above all, of the host, or consecrated wafer, lead all who receive them to practice idolatry—flat, palpable idolatry; the paying that worship to the creature which is due to God alone. Therefore, they have a natural tendency to hinder, if not utterly destroy, the love of God.

Secondly. The doctrine of the Church of Rome has a natural tendency to hinder, if not destroy, the love of our neighbor. By the love of our neighbor I mean universal benevolence; tender good-will to all men. For in this respect every child of man, every son of Adam, is our neighbor; as we may easily learn from our Lord's history of the good Samaritan. Now, the Church of Rome, by asserting that all who are not of her own Church—that is, the bulk of mankind—are in a state of utter rejection from God, despised and hated by him that made them; and by her bitter (I might say accursed) anathemas devoting to absolute, everlasting destruction all who willingly or unwillingly differ from her in any jot or tittle, teaches all her members to look upon them with the same eyes that she supposes God to do; to regard them as mere fire-brands of hell, "vessels of wrath,

fitted for destruction." And what love can you entertain for such? No other than you can believe God to have for them. Therefore, every anathema denounced by the Church of Rome against all who differ from her has a natural tendency not only to hinder, but utterly destroy the love of our neighbor.

Thirdly. The same doctrine which devotes to utter destruction so vast a majority of mankind must greatly indispose us for showing them the justice which is due to all men. For how hard is it to be just to them we hate? to render them their due, either in thought, word, or action? Indeed, we violate justice by this very thing, by not loving them as ourselves. For we do not render unto all their due; seeing love is due to all mankind. If we "owe no man any thing" beside, do we not owe this, "to love one another?" And where love is totally wanting, what other justice can be expected? Will not a whole train of injurious tempers and passions, of wrong words and actions, naturally follow? So plain, so undeniably plain it is, that this doctrine of the Church of Rome (to instance at present in no more), that "all but those of their own Church are accursed," has a natural tendency to hinder, yea, utterly to destroy, justice.

Fourthly. Its natural tendency to destroy mercy is equally glaring and undeniable. We need not use any reasoning to prove this; only cast your eyes upon matter of fact! What terrible proofs of it do we see in the execrable crusades against the Albigenses! in those horrible wars in the Holy Land, where so many rivers of blood were poured out! in the many millions that have been butchered in Europe since the beginning of the Reformation, not only in the open field, but in prisons, on the scaffold, on the gibbet, at the stake! For how many thousand lives, barbarously taken away, has Philip the Second to give an account to God! For how many thousand that infamous, perfidious butcher, Charles the Ninth of France, to say nothing of our own bloody Queen Mary, not much inferior to them! See, in Europe, in America, in the uttermost parts of Asia, the dungeons, the racks, the various tortures of the Inquisition, so unhappily styled *the House of Mercy!* Yea, such mercy as is in the fiends in hell! such mercy as the natives of Ireland, in the last century, showed to myriads of their Protestant countrymen! Such is the mercy which the doctrine of the Church of Rome very naturally inspires!

Lastly. The doctrine of the Church of Rome has a natural tendency to destroy truth from off the earth. What can more

directly tend to this, what can more incite her own members to all manner of lying and falsehood, than that precious doctrine of the Church of Rome, that no faith is to be kept with heretics? Can I believe one word that a man says who espouses this principle? I know it has been frequently affirmed that the Church of Rome has renounced this doctrine. But I ask, When or where? By what public and authentic act, notified to all the world? This principle has been publicly and openly avowed by a whole council, the ever renowned Council of Constance—an assembly never to be paralleled, either among Turks or Pagans, for regard to justice, mercy, and truth! But when and where was it as publicly disavowed? Till this is done in the face of the sun this doctrine must stand before all mankind as an avowed principle of the Church of Rome.

And will this operate only toward heretics, toward the supposed enemies of the Church? Nay, where men have once learned not to keep faith with heretics they will not long keep it toward Catholics. When they have once overleaped the bounds of truth, and habituated themselves to lying and dissimulation toward one kind of men, will they not easily learn to behave in the same manner toward all men? So that, instead of “putting away all lying,” they will put away all truth; and instead of having “no guile found in their mouth,” there will be found nothing else therein!

Thus naturally do the principles of the Romanists tend to banish truth from among themselves. And have they not an equal tendency to cause lying and dissimulation among those that are not of their communion by that Romish principle, that force is to be used in matters of religion? that if men are not of our sentiments, of our Church, we should thus “compel them to come in?” Must not this, in the very nature of things, induce all those over whom they have any power, to dissemble if not deny those opinions, who vary ever so little from what that Church has determined? And if a habit of lying and dissimulation is once formed it will not confine itself to matters of religion. It will assuredly spread into common life, and tincture the whole conversation.

Again: Some of the most eminent Roman casuists (whose books are duly licensed by the heads of the Church) lay it down as an undoubted maxim that, although malicious lies are sins, yet “officious lies—that is, lies told in order to do good—are not only innocent, but meritorious.” Now, what a flood-gate does

this open for falsehood of every kind ! Therefore, this doctrine, likewise, has a natural tendency to banish truth from the earth.

One doctrine more of the Romish Church must not here be passed over—I mean that of absolution by a priest ; as it has a clear, direct tendency to destroy both justice, mercy, and truth ; yea, to drive all virtue out of the world. For if a man (and not always a very good man) has power to forgive sins—if he can at pleasure forgive any violation, either of truth, or mercy, or justice—what an irresistible temptation must this be to men of weak or corrupt minds ! Will they be scrupulous with regard to any pleasing sin, when they can be absolved upon easy terms ? And if after this any scruple remain, is not a remedy for it provided ? Are there not papal indulgences to be had ; yea, plenary indulgences ? I have seen one of these which was purchased at Rome not many years ago. This single doctrine of papal indulgences strikes at the root of all religion. And were the Church of Rome ever so faultless in all other respects, yet till this power of forgiving sins, whether by priestly absolution or papal indulgences, is openly and absolutely disclaimed, and till these practices are totally abolished, there can be no security in that Church for any morality, any religion, any justice or mercy or truth.

A WORD TO A PROTESTANT.

1. Do NOT you call yourself a Protestant ? Why so ? Do you know what the word means ? What is a Protestant ? I suppose you mean one that is not a papist. But what is a papist ? If you do not know, say so ; acknowledge you cannot tell. Is not this the case ? You call yourself a Protestant ; but you do not know what a Protestant is. You talk against papists ; and yet neither do you know what a papist is. Why do you pretend, then, to the knowledge which you have not ? Why do you use words which you do not understand ?

2. Are you desirous to know what these words, *papist* and *Protestant*, mean ? A papist is one who holds the Pope or Bishop of Rome (the name *papa*—that is, *father*—was formerly given to all bishops) to be head of the whole Christian Church ; and the Church of Rome, or that which owns the pope as their head, to be the only Christian Church.

3. In a course of years many errors crept into this Church, of which good men complained from time to time. At last, about

two hundred years ago, the pope appointed many bishops and others to meet at a town in Germany called Trent. But these, instead of amending those errors, established them all by a law, and so delivered them down to all succeeding generations.

4. Among these errors may be numbered their doctrine of seven sacraments; of transubstantiation; of communion in one kind only; of purgatory, and praying for the dead therein; of veneration of relics; and of indulgences, or pardons granted by the pope, and to be bought for money.

It is thought by some that these errors, great as they are, do only defile the purity of Christianity; but it is sure the following strike at its very root, and tend to banish true religion out of the world:

5. First. The doctrine of merit. The very foundation of Christianity is that a man can merit nothing of God; that we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ;" not for any of our works or of our deservings, but by faith in the blood of the covenant.

But the papists hold that a man may by his works merit or deserve eternal life; and that we are justified not by faith in Christ alone, but by faith and works together.

This doctrine strikes at the root of Christian faith, the only foundation of true religion.

6. Secondly. The doctrine of praying to saints and worshipping of images. To the Virgin Mary they pray in these words: "O Mother of God, O Queen of Heaven, command thy Son to have mercy upon us!" And, "The right use of images," says the Council of Trent, "is to honor them by bowing down before them."

This doctrine strikes at the root of that great commandment (which the papists call part of the first), "Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them"—that is, not any image whatsoever. It is gross, open, palpable idolatry, such as can neither be denied nor excused; and tends directly to destroy the love of God, which is, indeed, the first and great commandment.

7. Thirdly. The doctrine of persecution. This has been for many ages a favorite doctrine of the Church of Rome. And the papists in general still maintain that all heretics (that is, all who differ from them) ought to be compelled to receive what they call the true faith; to be forced into the Church or out of the world.

Now, this strikes at the root of, and utterly tears up, the second

great commandment. It directly tends to bring in blind, bitter zeal; anger, hatred, malice, variance; every temper, word, and work that is just contrary to the loving our neighbor as ourselves.

So plain it is that these grand popish doctrines of merit, idolatry, and persecution, by destroying both faith and the love of God and of our neighbor, tend to banish true Christianity out of the world.

8. Well might our forefathers protest against these. And hence it was that they were called Protestants; even because they publicly protested, as against all the errors of the papists, so against these three in particular: The making void Christian faith, by holding that man may merit heaven by his own works; the overthrowing the love of God by idolatry, and the love of our neighbor by persecution.

Are you then a Protestant, truly so-called? Do you protest, as against all the rest, so in particular against these three grand fundamental errors of popery? Do you publicly protest against all merit in man? all salvation by your own works? against all idolatry of every sort? and against every kind and degree of persecution?

I question not but you do. You publicly protest against all these horrible errors of popery. But does your heart agree with your lips? Do you not inwardly cherish what you outwardly renounce? It is well if you who cry out so much against papists are not one yourself. It is well if you are not yourself (as little as you may think of it) a rank papist in your heart.

9. For, first, how do you hope to be saved? by doing thus and thus? by doing no harm and paying every man his own and saying your prayers and going to church and sacrament? Alas! alas! Now you have thrown off the mask. This is popery barefaced. You may just as well speak plain and say, "I trust to be saved by the merit of my own works." But where is Christ all this time? Why, he is not to come in till you get to the end of your prayer; and then you will say, "for Jesus Christ's sake," because so it stands in your book. O, my friend, your very foundation is popish. You seek salvation by your own works. You trample upon the "blood of the covenant." And what can a poor papist do more?

10. But let us go on: Are you clear of idolatry any more than the papists are? It may be, indeed, yours is in a different way. But how little does that signify! They set up their idols in their churches; you set up yours in your heart. Their idols are only

covered with gold or silver; but yours is solid gold. They worship the picture of the Queen of Heaven; you, the picture of the Queen or King of England. In another way they idolize a dead man or woman; whereas your idol is yet alive. O, how little is the difference before God! How small pre-eminence has the money-worshiper at London over the image-worshiper at Rome; or the idolizer of a living sinner over him that prays to a dead saint!

11. Take one step farther: Does the papist abroad persecute? Does he force another man's conscience? So does the papist at home as far as he can, for all he calls himself a Protestant. Will the man in Italy tolerate no opinion but his own? No more, if he could help it, would the man in England. Would you? Do not you think the government much overseen, in bearing with any but those of the Church? Do not you wish they would put down such and such people? You know what you would do if you were in their place. And by the very same spirit you would continue the Inquisition at Rome and rekindle the fires in Smithfield.

12. It is because our nation is overrun with such Protestants, who are full of their own good deservings as well as of abominable idolatry, and of blind, fiery zeal of the whole spirit of persecution, that the sword of God, the great, the just, the jealous God, is even now drawn in our land; that the armies of the aliens are hovering over it as a vulture over his prey; and that the open papists are on the very point of swallowing up the pretended Protestants. (This was wrote during the late rebellion.)

13. Do you desire to escape the scourge of God? Then I entreat you, first, be a real Protestant. By the Spirit of God assisting you (for without him you know you can do nothing) cast away all that trust in your own righteousness, all hope of being saved by your own works. Own your merit is everlasting damnation; that you deserve the damnation of hell. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Lie in the dust. Let your mouth be stopped, and let all your confidence be in the "blood of sprinkling," all your hope in Jesus Christ "the righteous," all your faith in "Him that justifieth the ungodly, through the redemption that is in Jesus."

O, put away your idols out of your heart. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." "Having food to eat and raiment to put on, be content;" desire nothing more but God. To-day hear his voice who continually cries, "My son, give me thy heart." Give yourself to him who gave himself for you. May

you love God as he has loved us ! Let him be your desire, your delight, your joy, your portion, in time and in eternity.

And if you love God you will love your brother also ; you will be ready to lay down your life for his sake ; so far from any desire to take away his life or hurt a hair of his head. You will then leave his conscience uncontrolled ; you will no more think of forcing him into your own opinions, as neither can he force you to judge by his conscience. But each shall "give an account of himself to God."

14. It is true if his conscience be misinformed you should endeavor to inform him better. But whatever you do let it be done in charity, in love, and meekness of wisdom. Be zealous for God, but remember that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God ;" that angry zeal, though opposing sin, is the servant of sin ; that true zeal is only the flame of love. Let this be your truly Protestant zeal. While you abhor every kind and degree of persecution, let your heart burn with love to all mankind, to friends and enemies, neighbors and strangers ; to Christians, heathens, Jews, Turks, papists, heretics ; to every soul which God hath made. "Let" this "your light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

THE WRITINGS OF BARON SWEDENBORG.

1. "I was born," says the baron, "in the year 1689. My father, Jasper Swedenborg, was Bishop of Westragothia. King Charles the Twelfth appointed me assessor in the Metallic College, in which office I continued till the year 1747, when I quitted the office to give myself wholly to the new function which the Lord had called me to. In 1719 I was ennobled by Queen Ulrica Eleonora, and named Swedenborg. I am a fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm. In the year 1734 I published the *Regnum Minerale*, in three volumes folio, and in 1738 I took a journey into Italy, and stayed a year at Venice and Rome.

"In the year 1743 the Lord was pleased to manifest himself to me in a personal appearance, to open in me a sight of the spiritual world, and to enable me to converse with spirits and angels ; and this privilege I have enjoyed ever since. From that time I began to publish various unknown *arcana*, that have been either seen by me or revealed to me, concerning God, the spiritual sense of Scripture, the state of man after death, heaven and hell, and many important truths."

This is dated "London, 1769." I think he lived nine or ten years longer.

2. Many years ago the baron came over to England and lodged at one Mr. Brockmer's, who informed me (and the same information was given me by Mr. Mathesius, a very serious Swedish clergy-

man, both of whom were alive when I left London, and, I suppose, are so still) that while he was in his house he had a violent fever, in the height of which, being totally delirious, he broke from Mr. Brockmer, ran into the street stark naked, proclaimed himself the Messiah, and rolled himself in the mire. I suppose he dates from this time his admission into the society of angels. From this time we are undoubtedly to date that peculiar species of insanity which attended him, with scarce any intermission, to the day of his death.

3. In all history I find but one instance of an insanity parallel to this: I mean that related by the Roman poet of the gentleman at Argos, in other respects a sensible man:

*Qui se credebat miros audire tragædos,
In vacuo latus sessor plausorque theatro,*

“who imagined himself to hear admirable tragedies, and undoubtedly saw as well as heard the actors while he was sitting alone, and clapping them in the empty theater.” This seems to have been a purely natural disorder, although not easy to account for. Whether any thing preternatural was added in the case of the baron I do not undertake to determine.

4. The accounts of those “admirable tragedies” which he has published take up many quarto volumes. I have read little more of them than what we have in English, except his inimitable piece, *De Nuptiis Coelestibus*—“Of the Marriages in Heaven.” To the reading of this I acknowledge I was invited by the newness of the subject; and I cannot doubt but the same circumstance (though they were not sensible of it) contributed much to the pleasure which those pious men, Mr. Cl., Mr. Ha., and Mr. Cl—s, have received from his writings. The same pleasure they naturally desired to impart to their countrymen by translating, publishing, recommending, and propagating them with their might. They doubtless found an additional pleasure from the huge admiration wherewith many received them; and I should not wonder if some of these should be adopted into the society of angels, just as the baron himself was; nay, I cannot but apprehend that they have already attained to a degree of the same illumination.

5. Desiring to be thoroughly master of the subject, I procured the translation of the first volume of his last and largest theological work, entitled *True Christian Religion*. (The original the baron himself presented me with a little before he died.) I took an extract thereof from the beginning to the end, that I might be able to form a more accurate judgment. And one may trace

through the whole remains of a fine genius, "majestic, though in ruins!" From the whole I remark that what Mr. Law oddly imputes to Sir Isaac Newton is truly imputable to the baron: he "plowed with Jacob Behmen's heifer," and that both in philosophy and divinity. But he far exceeded his master; his dreams are more extraordinary than those of Jacob himself.

6. Nothing can be more extraordinary than his manner of expounding the Holy Scriptures, a specimen of which he has given in his exposition of the Decalogue, in which he undertakes to show, not only the literal and spiritual, but even the celestial meaning of each commandment. For example:

"By the fourth commandment in the spiritual sense is meant the regeneration and reformation of man. The work of regeneration is successive." This is borrowed from Jacob Behmen. "Answering in its several stages to man's conception, formation in the womb, his birth, and his education. The first act of the new birth is reformation, the second act of it is regeneration." That is, in plain English, the second act of the new birth is the new birth!

"In a spiritual sense, by honoring father and mother is meant revering and loving God and the Church. In a celestial sense, by father is meant revering and loving God and the Church. In a celestial sense, by father is meant God; by mother, the communion of saints.

"The celestial meaning of the sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not hate God.

"Committing adultery, in a spiritual sense, is adulterating the word of God.

"Stealing, in the celestial sense, is the taking away divine power from the Lord."

7. I will oblige the reader with a few more of his extraordinary expositions:

"In Scripture, by a garden, a grove, woods, are meant wisdom, intelligence, science; by the olive, the vine, the cedar, the poplar, and the oak are meant the good and truth of the Church, under the different characters of celestial, spiritual, rational, natural, and sensual; by a lamb, an ox, a sheep, a calf, a goat are meant innocence, charity, and natural affection; by Egypt is signified what is scientific; by Ashur, what is rational; by Edom, what is natural; by Moab, the adulteration of good; by Ammon, the adulteration of truth; by Jacob is meant the Church natural; by Israel, the Church spiritual; and by Judith, the Church celestial."

Can any person of common understanding defend any of these expositions? Are they not so utterly absurd, so far removed from all shadow of reason, that, instead of pronouncing them the dictates of the Holy Ghost, we cannot but judge them to be the whims of a distempered imagination? A thousand more equally absurd are to be found in all his writings; but I believe these are abundantly sufficient to show the man.

8. Equally extraordinary is the account which the baron gives of charity and faith :

“ When a man keeps the ten commandments charity follows of course.

“ Charity consists in living well.

“ Charity consists in willing what is good.”

That both these accounts are wrong is certain ; but who can reconcile one with the other ?

“ There can be no faith in an invisible God.”

This is bold indeed ! Was it intended to confute St. Paul making use of that very expression in describing the faith of Moses, “ He endured as seeing him that was invisible ? ”

“ Faith in general is a belief that whoever lives well and believes right shall be saved.”

This definition is quite ambiguous: believing right may have a hundred different meanings; and it is utterly false if that expression means any more than a belief “ that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Rather, faith in general is “ a divine evidence of things unseen.”

“ The Lord is charity and faith in man ; and man is charity and faith in the Lord.”

I make no scruple to affirm this is as arrant nonsense as was ever pronounced by any man in Bedlam.

9. Be this a specimen of the baron’s skill in expounding the Scriptures ? Come we now to his memorable visions and revelations.

Any serious man may observe that many of these are silly and childish to the last degree ; that many others are amazingly odd and whimsical ; many palpably absurd, contrary to all sound reason ; and many more contrary, not only to particular texts, but to the whole tenor of Scripture.

These are interspersed with all the doctrines which he delivers, in order to put them beyond all doubt. The grand error which we learn from his whole work is that there are not three persons in one God. This stares you in the face, almost in every page, from the beginning to the end of his book. So in the very first chapter,

OF GOD THE CREATOR,

we read, “ God is one, in essence and person, and Jesus Christ is he.

“ Jesus Christ is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

“ Before the creation of the world there was no Trinity, but it was provided and

made when God was manifested in the flesh, and then existed in the Lord Jesus Christ."

"A Trinity of divine persons existing before the creation of the world is a Trinity of Gods."

10. But he is not content with denying the Trinity. He goes much farther than this. He excludes all that believe it from salvation, and counts it the most damnable of all heresies.

"The Church is now in so ruinous a state that there are scarce any traces left of its ancient glory. And this has come to pass in consequence of their dividing the divine Trinity into three persons, each of which is declared to be God and Lord. This is the true source of all the atheism in the world."

I believe no Arian, Socinian, or Mohammedan ever affirmed this before.

Again: "The Nicene and Athanasian doctrine concerning a Trinity have given birth to a faith which has entirely overturned the Christian Church."

Nay, Bishop Bull has indisputably proved that this faith was delivered to the saints long before the Nicene Council sat, and before Athanasius was born.

Yet again: "He that confirmeth himself in a plurality of gods, by a plurality of persons, becomes like a statue formed with movable joints, in the midst of which Satan stands and speaks through its mouth."

So all that believe the Trinity are, according to his charitable sentence, possessed by the devil.

11. To confound all the Trinitarians at a stroke, he adds this memorable relation:

"In the spiritual world (which lies in the midst between heaven and hell, having heaven above and hell below) are climates and zones as in the natural. The frigid zones are the habitation of those first spirits who, while on earth, were lazy and indolent. Having once a desire to visit them, I was carried in the spirit to a region covered with snow." Remember, this region was in the other world! "It was on the Sabbath day; and I saw a number of men—that is, human spirits, who had their heads covered with lions' skins, by reason of the cold" (or who knows but the poor spirits might have been frozen to death?) "their bodies with the skins of leopards, and their legs and feet with bears' skins. I also observed several riding in chariots, made in the shape of dragons with horns; they were drawn by small horses without tails, which ran with the impetuosity of terrible fierce beasts. They were all flocking toward a church, in which hung a tablet inscribed, 'A divine Being, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in essence one, but in persons three.'"

He has abundance of relations to the same purpose. I will add but one more:

"I once saw a spirit as lightning falling from heaven. I asked him the reason of it. He replied: 'I was cast down, because I believed that God the Father and God

the Son are two persons.' All the angels believe they are but one person; and every word that contradicts this causeth in them the same pain as if they should snuff up some pungent powder into their nostrils, or as if one should bore their ears with an awl. And every one has a place in heaven according to his idea of God."

O, no; this is a deadly mistake. Every one has a place in heaven, not according to his ideas, but according to his works.

But, notwithstanding all his new revelations, I believe, according to the old one, "there are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and these three are one."

For the term *person* I contend not. I know no better; if any does, let him use it.

12. Let us now inquire what is the baron's own belief concerning the Trinity.

OF THE LORD THE REDEEMER.

"The Lord received his soul from Jehovah, and the divinity of the Father was the Lord's soul.

"The humanity whereby God sent himself into the world was the Son of God.

"The passion of the cross was the final temptation which the Lord endured as the grand prophet; and it was the means of the glorification of his humanity—that is, of its union with the divinity of the Father."

No; there is not a word in all the Bible concerning any such union of the humanity of Christ with the divinity of the Father. He was then glorified when he was received again into the glory which he had before the world began.

13. What, then, is redemption?

"Bringing the hells under subjection and reducing the heavens into order. God's omnipotence in accomplishing this work was an effect of his humanity." Strange indeed! "It is now believed that his passion on the cross was the very act of his redemption. No; the act of his redemption consisted in this, that he accomplished the last judgment which was executed in the spiritual world, and then separated the sheep from the goats, and drove out of heaven those that were united to the dragon. He then formed a new heaven of such as were found worthy, and a new hell of such as were found unworthy, and by degrees reduced all things in each place to order. By these acts he united himself to the Father, and the Father himself to him."

"The Lord is now accomplishing redemption—that is, subduing the hells and bringing the heavens into order; which was begun in the year 1757, together with the last judgment executed at the same time."

What heaps of absurdity are here! Only fit to have a place in *Orlando Furioso*.

Redemption is "bringing the hells into subjection." When were they not in subjection to the Almighty? "And reducing the heavens into order." When was heaven, the abode of angels,

out of order? "God's omnipotence was the effect of his humanity." Blasphemy, joined with consummate nonsense. "He by degrees reduced them to order." *By degrees?* No; a word, a nod from Jehovah was sufficient. "By these acts he united himself to the Father." Blasphemous nonsense again. "The last judgment was executed in the year 1757." This is the top of all the baron's discourses!

"It was once granted me to speak to the mother Mary. She appeared in heaven just over my head, and said she was the mother of the Lord, as he was born of her; but that when he was made God he put off all the humanity he had from her. And, therefore, she is unwilling any should call him her son, because in him all is divine."

In all this jumble of dissonant notions there is not one that is supported by any Scripture, taken in its plain, obvious meaning. And most of them are as contrary to Scripture as to common sense.

14. But here follows as curious an assertion as any :

"Christ redeemed the angels as well as men. The angels could not have stood" (mark the proof!) "unless the Lord had wrought this redemption, because the whole angelic heaven with the Church on earth is as a single man, whose internal is the angelic heaven, and whose external is the Church. To be more particular, the highest heaven is the head; the second and lowest heaven are the breast and middle region of the body. The Church on earth is the loins and the feet; the Lord is the soul of the whole man. Wherefore, unless the Lord had effected redemption this whole man must have been destroyed; the feet and loins must have perished by the defection of the lowest heaven; the region of the breast by the defection of the second heaven; and then the head, being left without a body, must of necessity have fallen into decay."

Surely, such an argument has not often been seen. But it is full as good as the conclusion drawn from it, which is utterly inconsistent with the declaration of St. Paul, "He took not upon himself the nature of angels" in order to redeem them, but only that of man, in order to redeem lost mankind.

OF THE HOLY GHOST.

"The Holy Ghost is not God himself, but the divine operation of God.

"The Holy Ghost is divine truth. Therefore, our Lord himself is also the Holy Ghost.

"The divine operation, signified by the Holy Ghost, consists in reformation and regeneration; and, in proportion as these are effected, in renovation, vivification, sanctification, and justification; and, in proportion as these are effected, in purification from evil, remission of sins, and final salvation."

Whoever is acquainted with the process of the work of God in the soul must see, with the fullest evidence, that a man talking

of it after this rate is, if not a madman, ignorant of all vital religion.

15. Another grand truth which the baron flatly denies is justification by faith; and he not only denies it, but supposes the belief of this also to exclude all that believe it from salvation.

“Do not you know that Luther has renounced his error with respect to justification by faith, and, in consequence thereof, is translated into the societies of the blessed?”

“The bottomless pit, mentioned in Rev. ix, 2, is in the south-east quarter. Here all those are confined who adopt the doctrine of justification by faith alone; and such of them as confirm that doctrine by the word of God are driven forth into a desert and mixed with pagans.”

However, they need not stay there always, for the baron assures us that on “believing that God is not wind, but a man, they will be joined to heaven.”

And we may hope the time is near; for he informs us that “some months ago the Lord called together his twelve apostles, and sent them forth through the whole spiritual world, as formerly through the natural, with a commission to preach the Gospel.”

So if men have not saving faith in this world, they may have it in the world to come.

But, indeed, there is no room for any justification in the Scripture sense—that is, forgiveness—if, as he vehemently asserts (after Jacob Behmen), that God was never angry. “It is extravagant folly,” says he, “to teach that God can be angry and punish; nay, it is blasphemy,” says this bold man, “to ascribe anger to God.” Then the Scripture is full of blasphemy; for it continually ascribes anger to God, both in the Old and in the New Testaments. Nay, our Lord himself is a blasphemer; for he ascribes anger to God: “His Lord was wroth;” yea, wroth to such a degree that “he delivered him to the tormentors. So likewise shall your heavenly Father do also unto you” (Matt. xviii, 34, 35). In flat opposition to which the baron affirms, “God cannot sentence man to damnation!”

To those who affirm, with Jacob Behmen, the baron, and most of the mystics, that there is no wrath in God, permit me to recommend the serious consideration of only one more passage of Scripture: “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and every bondman, and every freeman, said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great

day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ? ” (Rev. vi, 15-17.) Here I would ask, (1) Is not “ He that sitteth on the throne ” distinct from “ the Lamb ? ” (2) Is not “ the Lamb ” Jesus Christ ? God and man ? (3) Is no wrath ascribed to him in these words ? Who but a madman can deny it ? And if there was no wrath in the Lamb, what were all these afraid of—a shadow that never had any real existence ? Would the baron have told them, “ It is extravagant folly to suppose that God can be angry at all ? ”

16. But it is no wonder that he should utter such bold assertions, seeing he judges himself to be far wiser, not only than the inhabitants of this, but than those of the other world. “ I was amazed,” says he (in one of the visits he favored them with), “ that people who had resided some time in the spiritual world should be so ignorant still. Lest they should, continue so, I waved my hand as a token for them to listen.” He informs you farther that “ some of them fell into fits ”—hysterical or epileptic ?

Again : “ Being on a time in a conversation with angels, there joined us some spirits lately arrived from the other world. I related many particulars touching the world of spirits which were before unknown to them.”

Yet again : “ Being in the world of spirits, I observed a paved way quite crowded with spirits. I was informed it was the way which all pass when they leave the natural world. I stopped some of them, who did not yet know that they had left it, and questioned them about heaven and hell. They seemed altogether ignorant of them. I was amazed, and said, ‘ There is a heaven and a hell ; and you will know this when your present stupidity is dispelled. Every spirit, for a few days after death, imagines he is still alive in the world.’ ” No ; not an hour, not a single moment ! It is absolutely impossible. “ ‘ This is now the case with you.’ So saying, the angels dispelled their ignorance ; on which they exclaimed, ‘ O, where are we ? ’ We said, ‘ You are no longer in the natural world, but in the spiritual.’ They cried out, ‘ Then show us the way to heaven.’ We said, ‘ Follow us.’ They did so. The keepers of the gate opened it and let us all in ; but when those who receive strangers examined them, they said, instantly, ‘ Begone ; for ye have no conjunction with heaven.’ So they departed and hastened back.”

17. Permit me now to mention a few of his peculiar sentiments before I proceed to those relative to the world of spirits.

“ These truths are implanted in the understanding, in a place inferior to the soul.”

What place is that, in the understanding, which is inferior to the soul ?

“ Faith enters into man from the soul into the superior regions of the understanding.”

Is, then, the soul placed between the superior and inferior region of the understanding ?

"The human understanding is, as it were, the refining vessel, wherein natural faith is changed into spiritual faith."

I cannot at all comprehend this. It is quite above my understanding.

"The human mind is an organized form, consisting of spiritual substances within, and natural substances without, and, lastly, of material substances."

Nay, natural substances must be either matter or not matter. But, indeed, the mind is not matter, but spirit.

"Every man at death casteth off the body and retains the soul only, with a circumambient accretion which is derived from the purest parts of nature. But this accretion in those admitted into heaven is undermost, and the spiritual part uppermost; whereas in such as go to hell it is uppermost, and the spiritual part is undermost. Hence a man-angel speaks by influence from heaven; a man-devil by influence from hell."

"The form of God is truly and verily human; for God is true and very man."

But the Scripture says, "God is not a man." Which shall I believe, the Bible or the baron?

This is my grand objection to the baron's whole system relative to the invisible world: that it is not only quite unconnected with Scripture, but quite inconsistent with it. It strikes at the very foundation of Scripture. If this stands the Bible must fall.

18. The account which he gives of the creation is this: "By the light and heat proceeding from the spiritual sun, spiritual atmospheres were created. These being three, three heavens were formed, one for the highest angels, another for angels of the second degree, and the third for the lowest angels. But the spiritual universe could not subsist without a natural universe. Therefore, the natural sun was created at the same time; and by means of his light and heat three natural atmospheres were formed, inclosing the former, as the shell of a nut does the kernel." So, then, the spiritual world is inclosed in the natural! I thought it had been "in the midst between heaven and hell!" "By means of these atmospheres the terraqueous globe was formed, to be the abode of man and other animals. So God did not create the universe out of nothing, but by means of the spiritual sun."

But out of what did he create the spiritual sun? It was created, unless it was eternal. Therefore, this, or something else, was created out of nothing, unless some creature was co-eternal with its Creator. So that we must come, at last, to something created out of nothing; and this alone is properly creation. In this sense it was that "God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth." And what a sublimity is there, with the utmost simplicity, in the Mosaic account of the creation! How widely different from the odd, whimsical account of the baron and Jacob Behmen!

19. He informs you farther, "There is a full correspondence between angels and men." Of what kind? Not the wisest mortal can guess till the baron unfolds the

mystery. "There is not a single society in heaven which does not correspond with some part or member in man. One society in heaven is in the province of the heart or pancreas. Others are in correspondence with the spleen or the stomach, with the eye or the ear, and so on. The angels also know in what district of any part of man they dwell. I have seen a society of angels, consisting of many thousands, which appeared as a single man.

"And God joins all the heavenly societies in one, that they may be as a single man in his sight. Yea, and he joins together the congregations in hell, that they may be as a single infernal form. He separates these from heaven by a great gulf, lest heaven should be an occasion of torment to them. When I had informed an assembly of spirits of these things which they did not know before, the spirits which wore hats departed with their hats under their arms. In the spiritual world the intelligent spirits wear hats, but the stupid wear bonnets because they are bald, and baldness signifies stupidity."

I really think this needs no comment. He that can receive it, let him receive it.

20. "As angels and spirits are men (for no angel was ever created such), so they have divine worship; they have preaching in their temples; they have books and writings; particularly the word of God.

"The word, kept in the temples of the spiritual world, shines like a star of the first magnitude, sometimes like the sun; and from the radiance that encompasses it, there are beautiful rainbows formed about it. Yea, when any verse of it is wrote on paper, and the paper thrown into the air, that paper emits a bright light of the same form with the paper itself. And if any one rubs his hands, face, or clothes against the word, they emit a strong light, as I have often seen; but if any one who is under the influence of falsehood looks at the word as it lies in the holy repository, it appears to him quite black. If he touches it, it occasions an explosion attended with a loud noise; and he is thrown to a corner of the room, where he lies as dead for the space of an hour. If he write any passage of it on a piece of paper, and the paper be thrown up toward heaven, the same explosion follows, and the paper is torn to pieces and vanishes away."

Observe: These things could only be done by the almighty power of God. And can any one think the all-wise God would work all these miracles for no end?

21. "Every verse communicates with some particular society in heaven, and the whole communicates with the universal heaven. Therefore, as the Lord is God, so also heaven is the word." Exquisite nonsense and self-contradiction!

"There was an ancient word extant in the world previous to that given to the children of Israel." I cannot believe it. I believe there were no letters in the world till God wrote the two tables. "This word is preserved in heaven, and also in Great Tartary.

"I have conversed with angels who came from Great Tartary, and informed me the Tartars have had it time immemorial. They said, likewise, that in this word is contained the 'Book of Jasher,' mentioned Josh. x, 13, and the book called, 'The Wars of the Lord,' mentioned Num. xxi, 14. They told me that they cannot endure any foreigner to come among them; that the spirits from Tartary are separated from others, dwelling in a more eminent expanse; and they do not admit among

them any from the Christian world. The cause of this separation is because they are in possession of another word."

What, and do they envy it to others? And does this envy occasion their being so inhospitable? One may boldly say this information never came from the angels of God!

OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

22. Many of the preceding errors are not small, neither are they of little importance. But of far greater importance are the accounts he gives us "concerning heaven and hell." I have now his treatise on this subject lying before me, a few extracts from which I shall lay before the reader :

"Many learned Christians, when they find themselves, after death, in a body, in garments, and in houses, are in amazement."

And well they may be, since the Scripture gives us not the least intimation of any such thing.

"I have conversed with all whom I knew in the body, after their departure from it; with some for months, with some a year, and with many others; in all, I suppose, a hundred thousand; many of whom were in heaven and many in hell."

Perhaps, in a course of years, the gentleman of Argos might see a hundred thousand actors.

"Spirits are men in human form, and still they see, hear, and enjoy their senses."

"When they enter the other world, they retain the same face and voice that they had before; but after a time these are changed, according to their predominant affection, into beauty or deformity."

"As soon as they arrive all who were relations, friends, or acquaintance before meet and converse together, having a perfect remembrance of each other. But they are soon parted, according to the different lives they had led, and no more see or know one another."

"Arians find no place in heaven, but are gradually divested of the power of thinking right on any subject. At length they either become mutes, or else talk foolishly, moping about with their arms hanging down before them like paralytics or idiots."

"When a man dies he is equally in a body as before, nor is there to all appearance the least difference; only it is a spiritual body, freed from all the grossness of matter; so he seems to himself to be as he was in this world, and knows not as yet that he has passed through death. He possesses every outward and inward sense that he possessed before; and he who took delight in studying, reads and writes as before. He leaves nothing behind him but his earthly covering; he takes with him his memory; retaining all that he ever heard, saw, read, learned, or thought in the world, from his infancy to his leaving it."

Who is able to reconcile this either with Scripture, philosophy, or common-sense?

"After death the examining angels inspect a man's face and commence their

inquest, which begins at the fingers of each hand, and is from thence continued throughout the whole body."

Was ever so odd a thing imagined as this examining spirits from the fingers' ends?

23. "The new comers are tried by good spirits. They are known from turning themselves frequently to certain points of the compass, and from taking the ways that lead thereto when they are left alone.

"Men eminently holy are taken to heaven immediately after death, and men eminently wicked cast into hell. But most spirits go through three states before they enter either hell or heaven.

"In the first men do not know that they are dead. This may continue a week, a month, a year. Men and their wives commonly continue together a longer or shorter time, according as they agreed in this world. But if they have lived at variance, they usually break into strife and quarreling, even unto fighting. Yet they are not totally separated till they enter their second state.

"The second state is their inferior state, in which both the good and bad, being stripped of all disguise and all self-deceit, see and show what spirit they are of.

"The third state is a state of instruction for them to go to heaven.

"But few spirits go to heaven till they have undergone vastation. This is performed in subterraneous places, where some pass through very painful discipline. Here they are divested of all earthly affections, without which admission into heaven would be attended with danger. The region appointed for vastation is under the feet and surrounded with infernals. Evil spirits are employed in the vastation of the good."

Then the wicked do not cease from troubling, neither are the weary at rest!

How exceeding small is the difference between the Romish and the mystic purgatory!

24. "Spirits that desire to go to heaven are told that God denies entrance into heaven to no one, and if they desire it they may be admitted into it and stay there. Some of them, accordingly, were admitted; but no sooner did they enter than they were struck with the influx of the heavenly light and seized with such a heartfelt agony that they were racked with infernal pains, and, being mad with anguish, cast themselves down headlong.

"Sometimes hypocrites insinuate themselves into heaven. But they presently feel an inward anguish, on which they cast themselves headlong into hell among their fellows."

But how did they pass the great gulf? Is it filled up since the time of Dives and Lazarus?

25. Let us now consider what account the baron gives of the inhabitants of heaven:

"God sometimes appears in heaven in an angelical form, but commonly as a sun; not horizontally or vertically, but before the face of the angels in a middle attitude. He appears in two places, in one before the right eye, in the other before the left eye. Before the right he appears as a perfect sun; before the left, as a bright moon of the same size with our moon, and surrounded with many lesser moons."

How agrees this poor, low, childish account, with that grand one of the apostle's, "Who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see?" (1 Tim. vi, 1-16.) No; nor men-angels, as the baron calls them.

"There is not an angel in heaven that was created such, nor a devil that was once a good angel; but all the angels and all the devils were formerly men upon earth."

This grand position of the baron, which runs through all his works, that all angels and devils were once men, without which his whole hypothesis falls to the ground, is palpably contrary to Scripture. We read in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job, "When I laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." But man was not yet created. Therefore, these sons of God were not, nor ever had been, men.

On the other hand, we read (2 Cor. xi, 3), "The serpent"—that is, the devil—"beguiled Eve through his subtlety." But this devil could not have been a man; for Abel, the first man that died, was not yet born.

"The angels are of both sexes, and there is marriage in heaven as well as on earth. Their beatitudes of spiritual conjugal love may be reckoned up to many thousands."

How is this consistent with our Lord's words, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven?" (Matt. xxii, 30.)

"The angels are not always in the same state, with regard to love and wisdom; sometimes their love is intense, sometimes not. When it is lowest, they may be said to be in the shade and in the cold, as their brightness is obscured and their state unjoyous. They are eclipsed and in a joyless state; otherwise, they would be carried away by self-love."

What! Can the angels in heaven be "carried away by self-love?" Then they may drop into hell.

"The angels of the highest heaven are naked because they are in perfect innocence." (I thought all the angels had been in perfect innocence.) "The next in flame-colored robes, the lower in white.

"The angels of an inferior heaven cannot converse with those of the superior, neither can they see them when they look up, their heaven being veiled, as it were, with a dark mist; nor can the superior angels converse with them without being deprived of their wisdom.

"Divine influx passes from God to man through his forehead; from the lower angels, all round from his forehead and temples; from the highest angels, through the back part of his head."

26. It would be tedious to point out the particular oddities and absurdities in the preceding account. It may suffice to remark in general that it contains nothing sublime, nothing worthy the dignity of the subject. Most of the images are low and mean and earthly, not raising, but sinking the mind of the reader; representing the very angels of God in such a light as might move us not to worship, but despise them. And there is a grossness and coarseness in his whole description of the invisible world which I am afraid will exceedingly tend to confirm rational infidels in a total disbelief of it.

27. But the most dangerous part of all his writings I take to be the account which he gives of hell. It directly tends to familiarize it to unholy men, to remove all their terror, and to make them consider it not as a place of torment, but a very tolerable habitation.

"In hell," says he, "there appear bats and owls, and likewise wolves, tigers, rats, and mice; and there grow thorns and thistles, briars and brambles. But these sometimes disappear; and then nothing is to be seen but heaps of stones and fens full of croaking frogs."

Yes; much more is to be seen in his *Treatise of Heaven and Hell*. Hear his own words:

"I was allowed to look into the hells. There are three hells as well as three heavens. Some of them appeared like caverns in rocks, first proceeding far horizontally, then descending, either perpendicularly or by windings, to a great depth. Some resembled the dens of wild beasts, others the subterraneous works in mines. Most of them are of three degrees of descent; the uppermost dark, the lowest of a fiery appearance. In some hells appear, as it were, ruins of houses in which infernal spirits skulk. In the milder hells are a kind of rude cottages; in some places like a city with streets and lanes, inhabited by infernal spirits that live together in hatred, quarrelings, and fighting, even to blood, while in the streets thefts and robberies are committed. There are also gloomy woods in which the spirits wander like wild beasts, and caves into which some, when pursued by others, fly for refuge. Moreover, there are sandy deserts with ragged rocks and scattered cottages; and to these deserts the worst spirits are at last driven."

28. But how does this agree with what we read in the Scripture concerning hell fire?

The baron answers: "Hell fire is not a material fire, but it is the love of self and the world, together with all the inordinate passions and evil concupiscences springing therefrom. They who are in hell have no sensation of heat or burning, but only such kind of heat as inflames their evil passions. But this heat is turned into intense cold on any influx of heat from heaven. At such times the infernals are seized with a convulsive shivering, like people in an ague fit."

It was said: "Evil spirits cast themselves into hell of their own accord. How does this come to pass? There exhale from hell into the world of spirits certain

fetid vapors, which evil spirits are greedily fond of. For as was the sin which each was fond of in this life, such is the stink of which he is fond in the next. Thus they that had perverted divine truths delight in urinous smells; misers in such smells as proceed from swine and putrefying flesh; while such as lived in sensual pleasures find their gratification in ordure; and hence we may perceive whence melancholy and lowness of spirits proceed. Those spirits that delight in things indigested and putrid, such as meats corrupted in the stomach, hold their confabulations in such sinks of uncleanness in man as are suitable to their impure affections. These spirits are near the stomach, some higher, some lower, and occasion uneasiness of mind; but this anguish those who know no better ascribe to disorders of the stomach or bowels."

But to return: "From every particular hell exhale effluvia from the qualities of the spirits therein. These striking the senses of those that are of similar affections excite in them the most grateful perceptions. They presently turn to the quarter whence those effluvia rise, and hasten to be there. On their first arrival they are received with a show of kindness; but it lasts only a few hours; then they are vexed all manner of ways. And these miseries are called hell fire.

"Gnashing of teeth means the various disputes and wranglings of such as are in error."

How egregiously trifling is this account! So puerile, so far beneath the importance of the subject that one who did not know the character of the writer might naturally imagine he was turning it into burlesque.

29. But the masterpiece of all he has wrote upon the head you have in the following account, which I transcribe at large, that the pious reader may know how to judge of this highly illuminated author:

"The state of those who enter the other world is as follows: 1. As soon as they die they do not know for some days but that they are living in the former world." This is a favorite sentiment of the baron; but how palpably absurd! "2. They then see they are in the world of spirits, which is between heaven and hell." No; this will never agree with our Lord's words, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" neither with those, "The rich man also died; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Here was no interval; but as soon as ever he had left the earth he was lifting up his eyes in hell! "3. The new spirit is led about to various societies, good and bad, and examined how he is affected by one or the other. 4. If he is affected with good, he is introduced to good ones of various kinds till he comes to a society corresponding with his own natural affection. He there puts off the natural and puts on the spiritual affection, and then is taken up into heaven." How utterly contrary is this roundabout way to the plain words of Scripture, "The poor man

died, and was carried of angels into Abraham's bosom!" See, the instant the soul left the body it was lodged in the paradise of God. "5. They who have no affection to good are introduced to the evil societies of various kinds till they come to one that corresponds with their evil affections." O, no; the devil and his angels will make shorter work with those that know not God. "6. Such as formerly enjoyed power and authority are made rulers over societies; but as they know not how to use their authority, after a few days they are degraded from it. I have seen such spirits when they were removed from one society to another, and invested with power in each, yet after a short time degraded in all. 7. After frequent degradations they do not care engage in any other public office, but retire and sit down in sadness till they are removed into a desert, where there are cottages for their habitations. There work is given them to do, and in proportion as they do it they receive food; but if they do it not they are kept fasting till hunger forces them to work. Food in the spiritual world is like the various kinds of food in our world; and it is given from heaven by the Lord to every one, according to the services he performs; for to him who does no service no food is given." Did ever mortal before so practice the art of sinking? give so poor, low, gross an account of the other world? But he proceeds: "8. After some time they are disgusted with all employment, and then they go out of their cottages, and sit down in solitude and indolence. But as no food is given them they grow hungry, and think of nothing but how they may get something to eat. Some of whom they ask alms say, 'Come with us and we will give you work and meat too.'" Can any one believe this—that spirits suffer hunger and are obliged to go a-begging? "9. They work awhile, but then leave their work and betake themselves to company till their masters turn them off. 10. On their dismissal they see a path that leads to a sort of cavern. The door is opened, and they enter in and ask whether any food is to be had there. Being answered, 'There is,' they ask leave to stay there, and leave is given them. Then they are brought into the cavern, and the door is shut after them. The governor of the cavern comes, and says, 'Ye are never to leave this place more. Behold your companions; they all work hard; and in proportion to their work they receive food from heaven.' Their companions then tell them, 'Our governor knows for what work every one is best suited. He enjoins it daily, and when we have finished our work we receive our food.'" O,

how much more comfortable is the condition of these spirits in hell than that of the galley slaves at Marseilles, or the Indians in the mines of Potosi! “‘But if we will not finish our work we receive neither food nor clothes.’” *Clothes!* I never knew before that we should want any in the other world. “If any does mischief to another he is thrown into a corner of the cavern upon a couch of cursed dust.” Does he mean of hot ashes? “Here he is miserably tormented till the governor sees he repents, and then he is taken off and ordered again to his work.” Was ever any thing more curious or more encouraging to men that resolve to live and die in their sins? You see, there is place for repentance even in hell! If he repent of his sins even there, though he may be tormented awhile, yet the devil, seeing him penitent, will have mercy upon him! But here is more comfort still: “Every one in hell is at liberty to walk, converse, and to sleep when he has done his work. He is then”—surely, such a thought never entered into the heart of a Christian before!—“He is then led into the inner part of the cavern, where there are harlots, and he is permitted to take one for himself.” Amazing! So the Christian Koran exceeds even the Mohammedan! Mohammed allowed such to be in paradise, but he never thought of placing them in hell! The baron should have concluded here, for nothing can exceed this. But he adds: “Hell consists of such caverns, which are nothing but eternal work-houses. The work of those who were unjust judges is to prepare vermilion and to mix it up into a paint to paint the faces of harlots. The most abandoned spirits are driven into a wilderness and compelled to carry burdens.”

So here is the uttermost punishment that is allotted for the worst of all the damned spirits!

30. I will add but one more of the baron's dreams, to illustrate one of the preceding: “Satan was once permitted to ascend out of hell with a woman to my house. She was of the tribe of Sirens, who can assume all figures and all habits of beauty and ornament. All such are harlots in the world of spirits. I asked Satan if the woman was his wife. He answered, ‘Neither I nor any in our society have wives; she is my harlot.’ She then inspired him with wanton lust, and he kissed her and cried, ‘Ah, my Adonis!’ I said, ‘What do thou and thy companions think of God?’ He said, ‘God, heaven, angels, and the like are all empty words.’ I answered, ‘O, Satan, thou hast lost thy understanding! Recollect that thou hast lived in another world!’ Immediately his recollection returned, and he saw his error. But the cloud soon returned upon his understanding, and he was just the same as before.”

31. Having now taken a sufficient view of the baron's reveries,

Let us turn to the oracles of God. What saith the Scripture? What account does God himself give of the state of wicked men after death? Not to multiply texts, I will cite a very few out of many that might be produced: "Tophet is ordained of old: he hath made it deep and large" (God himself, not man). "The pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it" (Isa. xxx, 33). "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix, 47. 48). "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv, 41). "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i, 9). And in what condition are those that are punished with this everlasting destruction? Do they eat and drink and wear apparel and chose themselves harlots and walk and enjoy sweet sleep? Nothing less. If the word of God is true, if "the Scripture cannot be broken," the wicked, one and all, "are cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. xix, 20). Yea, "whosoever is not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire" (xx, 15). But they will not eat or drink or converse or dally with women, neither will they sleep there. For "they have no rest day nor night; but the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

32. Who illuminated either Jacob Behmen or Baron Swedenborg flatly to contradict these things? It could not be the God of the holy prophets; for he is always consistent with himself. Certainly, it was the spirit of darkness. And, indeed, "the light which was in them was darkness," while they labored to kill the never-dying worm and to put out the unquenchable fire! And with what face can any that profess to believe the Bible give any countenance to these dreamers? that filthy dreamer in particular who takes care to provide harlots instead of fire and brimstone for the devils and damned spirits in hell! O, my brethren, let none of you that fear God recommend such a writer any more, much less labor to make the deadly poison palatable by sweetening it with all care! All his folly and nonsense we may excuse, but not making God a liar, not his contradicting, in so open and flagrant a manner, the whole oracles of God! True, his tales are often exceeding lively, and as entertaining as the tales of the fairies, but I dare not give up my Bible for them, and I must

give up one or the other. If the preceding extracts are from God, then the Bible is only a fable ; but if "all Scriptures are given by inspiration of God," then let these dreams sink into the pit from whence they came.

JOHN WESLEY.

WAKEFIELD, May 9, 1782.

CHOICE EXTRACTS FROM MR. WESLEY'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH
VARIOUS PERSONS.

To his Father.

LINCOLN COLLEGE, December 19, 1729.

DEAR SIR : As I was looking over, the other day, Mr. Ditton's discourse on the Resurrection of Christ, I found toward the end of it a sort of essay on the Origin of Evil. I fancied the shortness of it, if nothing else, would make you willing to read it ; though very probably you will not find much in it which has not occurred to your thoughts before.

"Since the supreme Being must needs be infinitely and essentially good, as well as wise and powerful, it has been esteemed no little difficulty to show how evil came into the world. *Unde malum* [whence came evil] has been a mighty question."

There were some who, in order to solve this, supposed two supreme, governing principles, the one a good, the other an evil one ; which latter was independent on, and of equal power with, the former, and the author of all that was irregular or bad in the universe. This monstrous scheme the Manichees fell into and much improved, but were sufficiently confuted by St. Austin, who had reason to be particularly acquainted with their tenets.

But the plain truth is, the hypothesis requires no more to the confutation of it than the bare proposing it. Two supreme, independent principles is next door to a contradiction in terms. It is the very same thing, in result and consequence, as saying two absolute infinities ; and he that says two had as good say ten or fifty or any other number whatever. Nay, if there can be two essentially distinct, absolute infinities, there may be an infinity of such absolute infinities ; that is as much as to say, none of them all would be an absolute infinite, or that none of them all would be properly and really infinite. "For real infinity is strict and absolute infinity, and only that." I am, dear sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate son.

To the Same.

January, 1731.

DEAR SIR : Though some of the postulata upon which Archbishop King builds his hypothesis of the Origin of Evil be such as very few will admit of, yet, since the superstructure is regular and well-contrived, I thought you would not be unwilling to see

the scheme of that celebrated work. He divides it into five chapters.

The sum of the first chapter is this : The first notions we have of outward things are our conceptions of motion, matter, and space. Concerning each of these, we soon observe that it does not exist of itself ; and, consequently, that there must be some first cause to which all of them owe their existence. Although we have no faculty for the direct perception of this First Cause, and so can know very little more of him than a blind man of light, yet thus much we know of him by the faculties we have, that he is one infinite in nature and power, free, intelligent, and omniscient ; that, consequently, he proposes to himself an end in every one of his actions ; and that the end of his creating the world was the exercise of his power and wisdom and goodness ; which he, therefore, made as perfect as it could be made by infinite goodness and power and wisdom.

Chapter II. But if so, how came evil into the world ? If the world was made by such an agent with such an intention, how is it that either imperfection or natural or moral evils have a place in it ? Is not this difficulty best solved by the Manichæan supposition that there is an evil as well as a good principle ? By no means ; for it is just as repugnant to infinite goodness to create what it foresaw would be spoiled by another as to create what would be spoiled by the constitution of its own nature ; their supposition, therefore, leaves the difficulty as it found it. But if it could be proved that to permit evils in the world is consistent with, nay, necessarily results from, infinite goodness, then the difficulty would vanish ; and to prove this is the design of the following treatise.

Chapter III. All created beings, as such, are necessarily imperfect ; nay, infinitely distant from supreme perfection. Nor can they all be equally perfect, since some must be only parts of others. As to their properties, too, some must be perfecter than others ; for suppose any number of the most perfect beings created, infinite goodness would prompt the Creator to add less perfect beings to those, if their existence neither lessened the number nor conveniences of the more perfect. The existence of matter, for instance, neither lessens the number nor the conveniences of pure spirits. Therefore, the addition of material beings to spiritual was not contrary to, but resulted from, infinite goodness.

Chapter IV. As the evils of imperfection necessarily spring from this, that the imperfect things were made out of nothing, so natural evils necessarily spring from their being made out of matter. For matter is totally useless without motion, or even without such a motion as will divide it into parts ; but this cannot be done without a contrariety of motions, and from this necessarily flows generation and corruption.

The material part of us being thus liable to corruption, pain is necessary to make us watchful against it, and to warn us of what

tends toward it; as is the fear of death likewise, which is of use in many cases that pain does not reach. From these all the passions necessarily spring; nor can these be extinguished while those remain. But if pain and the fear of death were extinguished, no animal could long subsist. Since, therefore, these evils are necessarily joined with more than equivalent goods, the permitting these is not repugnant to, but flows from, infinite goodness. The same observation holds as to hunger, thirst, childhood, age, diseases, wild beasts, and poisons. They are all, therefore, permitted because each of them is necessarily connected with such a good as outweighs the evil.

Chapter V. Touching moral evils (by which I mean "inconveniences arising from the choice of the sufferer"), I propose to show: 1. What is the nature of choice or election. 2. That our happiness consists in the elections or choices we make. 3. What elections are improper to be made. 4. How we come to make such elections. And, 5. How our making them is consistent with the divine power and goodness.

1. By liberty I mean an active, self-determining power, which does not choose things because they are pleasing, but is pleased with them because it chooses them.

That God is endued with such a power I conclude, (1) Because nothing is good or evil, pleasing or displeasing to him before he chooses it. (2) Because his will or choice is the cause of goodness in all created things. (3) Because if God had not been endued with such a principle he would never have created any thing.

But it is to be observed, farther, that God sees and chooses whatever is connected with what he chooses in the same instant; and that he likewise chooses whatever is convenient for his creatures, in the same moment wherein he chooses to create them.

That man partakes of this principle I conclude, (1) Because experience shows it. (2) Because we observe in ourselves the signs and properties of such power. We observe we can counteract our appetites, senses, and even our reason, if we so choose; which we can no otherwise account for than by admitting such a power in ourselves.

2. The more of this power any being possesses, the less subject he is to the impulses of external agents, and the more commodious is his condition. Happiness rises from a due use of our faculties; if, therefore, this be the noblest of all our faculties, then our chief happiness lies in the due use of this; that is, in our elections. And, farther, election is the cause why things please us; he, therefore, who has an uncontrolled power of electing may please himself always; and if things fall out contrary to what he chooses he may change his choice and suit it to them, and so still be happy. Indeed, in this life his natural appetites will sometimes disturb his elections, and so prevent his perfect happiness; yet is it a fair step toward it that he has a power that can at all times find pleasure in itself, however outward things vary.

3. True it is, that this power sometimes gives pain ; namely, when it falls short of what it chooses ; which may come to pass if we choose either things impossible to be had or inconsistent with each other, or such as are out of our power (perhaps because others chose them before us) ; or, lastly, such as necessarily leads us into natural evils.

4. And into these foolish choices we may be betrayed either by ignorance, negligence, by indulging the exercise of liberty too far, by obstinacy or habit ; or, lastly, by the importunity of our natural appetites. Hence it appears how cautious we ought to be in choosing ; for, though we may alter our choice, yet to make that alteration is painful ; the more painful the longer we have persisted in it.

5. There are three ways by which God might have hindered his creatures from thus abusing their liberty. First, by not creating any being free ; but had this method been taken, then, (1) The whole universe would have been a mere machine. (2) That would have been wanting which is most pleasing to God of any thing in the universe, namely, the free service of his reasonable creatures. (3) His reasonable creatures would have been in a worse state than they are now, for only free agents can be perfectly happy ; as, without a possibility of choosing wrong there can be no freedom.

The second way by which God might prevent the abuse of liberty is by overruling this power, and constraining us to choose right. But this would be to do and undo, to contradict himself, to take away what he had given.

The third way by which God might have hindered his creatures from making an ill-use of liberty is by placing them where they should have no temptation to abuse it. But this, too, would have been the same in effect as to have given them no liberty at all.

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and dutiful son.

Letter to his Mother.

January 18, 1725.

You have so well satisfied me as to the tenets of Thomas à Kempis that I have ventured to trouble you once more on a more dubious subject. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say that she would advise no one very young to read Dr. Taylor on *Holy Living and Dying*. She added, that he almost put her out of her senses when she was fifteen or sixteen years old ; because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances, in which I am doubtful, though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence. In reference to humility, the bishop says : " We must be sure, in some sense or other, to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come." And in treating of repent-

ance he says: "Whether God has forgiven us or no, we know not; therefore be sorrowful for ever having sinned." I take the more notice of this last sentence, because it seems to contradict his own words in the next section, where he says that by the Lord's Supper all the members are united to one another, and to Christ the Head. The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces necessary for, and our souls receive the seeds of, an immortal nature. Now surely these graces are not of so little force as that we cannot perceive whether we have them or not; if we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, which he will not do unless we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but in fear and trembling; and then, undoubtedly, in this life, we are of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this! Humility is undoubtedly necessary to salvation; and if all these things are essential to humility, who can be humble, who can be saved?

To the Same.

January, 1727.

I am shortly to take my master's degree. As I shall from that time be less interrupted by business not of my own choosing, I have drawn up for myself a scheme of studies from which I do not intend, for some years at least, to vary. I am perfectly come over to your opinion, that there are many truths it is not worth while to know. Curiosity, indeed, might be a sufficient plea for our laying out some time upon them if we had half a dozen centuries of life to come; but methinks it is great ill husbandry to spend a considerable part of the small pittance now allowed us in what makes us neither a quick nor a sure return.

Two days ago I was reading a dispute between those celebrated masters of controversy, Bishop Atterbury and Bishop Hoadly, but must own I was so injudicious as to break off in the middle. I could not conceive that the dignity of the end was at all proportioned to the difficulty of attaining it. And I thought the labor of twenty or thirty hours, if I was sure of succeeding, which I was not, would be but ill rewarded by that important piece of knowledge, whether Bishop Hoadly had misunderstood Bishop Atterbury or no.

About a year and a half ago I stole out of company at eight in the evening with a young gentleman with whom I was intimate. As we took a turn in an aisle of St. Mary's church, in expectation of a young lady's funeral, with whom we were both acquainted, I asked him if he really thought himself my friend; and if he did, why he would not do me all the good he could. He began to protest; in which I cut him short, by desiring him to oblige me in an instance, which he could not deny to be in his own power: to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already; that he

could not do me a greater kindness, as both of us would be fully convinced when we came to follow that young woman.

He turned exceedingly serious, and kept something of that disposition ever since. Yesterday was a fortnight, he died of a consumption. I saw him three days before he died; and, on the Sunday following, did him the last good office I could here, by preaching his funeral sermon, which was his desire when living.

A Letter to his Brother Samuel.

February 13, 1734.

DEAR BROTHER: Neither you nor I have any time to spare; so I must be as short as I can.

There are two questions between us; one relating to being good, the other to doing good. With regard to the former:

1. You allow I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and divine ordinances than I could do elsewhere; and I add, (1) I feel all this to be but just enough: (2) I have always found less than this to be too little for me; and therefore, (3) Whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation. As to the latter:

2. I am not careful to answer, what good I have done at Oxford; because I cannot think of it without the utmost danger. I am careful about what good I may do at Epworth, (1) Because I can think of it without any danger at all. (2) Because I cannot, as matters now stand, avoid thinking of it without sin.

3. Another can supply my place at Epworth better than at Oxford; and the good done here is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit to sweeten the fountain than to do the same to particular streams.

4. To the objection, "You are despised at Oxford; therefore, you can do no good there," I answer, (1) A Christian will be despised anywhere; (2) No one is a Christian till he is despised; (3) His being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much farther it, by making him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow that every one to whom you do good directly must esteem you, first or last. N.B.—A man may despise you for one thing, hate you for a second, and envy you for a third.

5. God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before; but I may not attempt to prevent it, with so great hazard to my own soul.

Your last argument is either *ignoratio elenchi* [a mistake of the question], or implies these two propositions: (1) "You resolve against any parochial cure of souls." (2) "The priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers is perjured." Let us add a third: "The tutor who, being in orders, never accepts of a parish is perjured;" and then I deny all three. I am, dear brother,

Your obliged and affectionate brother.

CHEERFULNESS IN RELIGION.

*To Mrs. Chapman.**March 29, 1737.*

True friendship is doubtless stronger than death, else yours could never have subsisted still in spite of all opposition, and even after thousands of miles are interposed between us. In the last proof you gave of it there are a few things which I think it lies on me to mention; as to the rest, my brother is the proper person to clear them up, as I suppose he has done long ago.

You seem to apprehend that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness and with a sociable, friendly temper. So far from it, that I am convinced, as true religion or holiness cannot be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, cannot be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavor to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hinderance to some greater good, or has a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule; and I know no other by which a sincere, reasonable Christian can be guided. In particular, I pursue this rule in eating, which I seldom do without much pleasure. And this I know is the will of God concerning me; that I should enjoy every pleasure that leads to my taking pleasure in him; and in such a measure as most leads to it. I know that, as to every action which is naturally pleasing, it is his will that it should be so; therefore, in taking that pleasure so far as it tends to this end (of taking pleasure in God), I do his will. Though, therefore, that pleasure be in some sense distinct from the love of God, yet is the taking of it by no means distinct from his will. No; you say yourself, It is his will I should take it. And here, indeed, is the hinge of the question, which I had once occasion to state in a letter to you; and more largely in a sermon, On the Love of God. If you will read over those I believe you will find you differ from Mr. Law and me in words only. You say, the pleasures you plead for are distinct from the love of God, as the cause from the effect. Why, then, they tend to it; and those which are only thus distinct from it no one excepts against. The whole of what he affirms, and that not on the authority of men, but from the words and example of God incarnate, is, there is one thing needful—to do the will of God; and his will is our sanctification; our renewal in the image of God, in faith and love, in all holiness and happiness. On this we are to fix our single eye, at all times, and in all places; for so did our Lord. This one thing we are to do; for so did our fellow-servant, Paul, after his example: “Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.” In other

words, we are to do nothing but what, directly or indirectly, leads to our holiness, which is his glory; and to do every such thing with this design, and in such a measure as may most promote it.

I am not mad, my dear friend, for asserting these to be the words of truth and soberness; neither are any of those, either in England or here, who have hitherto attempted to follow me. I am and must be an example to my flock; not, indeed, in my prudential rules, but, in some measure (if, giving God the glory, I may dare to say so), in my spirit and life and conversation. Yet all of them are, in your sense of the word, unlearned, and most of them of low understanding; and still, not one of them has been as yet entangled in any case of conscience which was not solved. And as to the nice distinctions you speak of, it is you, my friend, it is the wise, the learned, the disputers of this world, who are lost in them, and bewildered more and more the more they strive to extricate themselves. We have no need of nice distinctions; for I exhort all, dispute with none. I feed my brethren in Christ, as he giveth me power, with the pure unmixed milk of his word. And those who are as little children receive it not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Some grow thereby, and advance apace in peace and holiness. They grieve, it is true, for those who did run well, but are now turned back; and they fear for themselves, lest they also be tempted; yet, through the mercy of God, they despair not, but have still a good hope that they shall endure to the end. Not that this hope has any resemblance to enthusiasm, which is a hope to attain the end without the means: this they know is impossible, and therefore ground their hope on a constant careful use of all the means. And, if they keep in this way, with lowliness, patience, and meekness of resignation, they cannot carry the principle of pressing toward perfection too far. O, may you and I carry it far enough! Be fervent in spirit. "Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in every thing give thanks." Do every thing in the name of the Lord Jesus. Abound more and more in all holiness, and in zeal for every good word and work.

METHODISM PROSPERED.

To the Church of God which is in Hernhuth, John Wesley, an unworthy Presbyterian of the Church of God in England, wisheth all grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

October 14, 1738.

Glory be to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his unspeakable gift! for giving me to be an eye-witness of your faith and love and holy conversation in Christ Jesus! I have borne testimony thereof with all plainness of speech, in many parts of Germany, and thanks have been given to God by many on your behalf.

We are endeavoring here also, by the grace which is given us,

to be followers of you, as ye are of Christ. Fourteen were added to us since our return, so that we have now eight bands of men, consisting of fifty-six persons, all of whom seek for salvation only in the blood of Christ. As yet we have only two small bands of women; the one of three, the other of five persons. But here are many others who only wait till we have leisure to instruct them how they may most effectually build up one another in the faith and love of Him who gave himself for them.

Though my brother and I are not permitted to preach in most of the churches in London, yet (thanks be to God!) there are others left, wherein we have liberty to speak the truth as it is in Jesus. Likewise every evening, and on set evenings in the week at two several places, we publish the word of reconciliation, sometimes to twenty or thirty, sometimes to fifty or sixty, sometimes to three or four hundred persons, met together to hear it. We begin and end all our meetings with singing and prayer; and we know that our Lord heareth our prayer, having more than once or twice (and this was not done in a corner) received our petitions in that very hour.

Nor hath he left himself without other witnesses of his grace and truth. Ten ministers I know now in England who lay the right foundation, "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Over and above whom I have found one Anabaptist, and one, if not two, of the teachers among the Presbyterians here, who, I hope, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and teach the way of God in truth.

O, cease not, ye that are highly favored, to beseech our Lord that he would be with us even to the end; to remove that which is displeasing in his sight, to support that which is weak among us, to give us the whole mind that was in him, and teach us to walk even as he walked! And may the very God of peace fill up what is wanting in your faith, and build you up more and more in all lowliness of mind, in all plainness of speech, in all zeal and watchfulness; that he may present you to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that ye may be holy and unblamable in the day of his appearing.

Letter to his Brother, Charles Wesley.

BRISTOL, June 23, 1739.

DEAR BROTHER: My answer to them which trouble me is this: God commands me to do good unto all men; to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man commands me not to do this in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all. If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge ye.

"But," say they, "it is just that you submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." True; to every ordinance of man which is not contrary to the command of God. But if any man, bishop or other, ordain that I shall not do what God

commands me to do, to submit to that ordinance would be to obey man rather than God.

And to do this I have both an ordinary call and an extraordinary. My ordinary call is my ordination by the bishop: "Take thou authority to preach the word of God." My extraordinary call is witnessed by the works God doeth by my ministry; which prove that he is with me of a truth in this exercise of my office.

Perhaps this might be better expressed in another way: God bears witness in an extraordinary manner that my thus exercising my ordinary call is well pleasing in his sight.

But what if a bishop forbids this? I do not say, as St. Cyprian, *Populus a scelerato antistite separare se debet* [the people ought to separate themselves from a wicked bishop]. But I say, God being my helper, I will obey him still: and if I suffer for it, his will be done. Adieu!

FAITHFULNESS IN LITTLE THINGS.

To Miss Furley, afterward Mrs. Downes.

December 22, 1756.

It is a happy thing if we can learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Weakness of body and heaviness of mind will, I trust, have this good effect upon you. The particular lesson which you have now to learn is to be faithful in comparatively little things; particularly in conversation. God hath given you a tongue: Why? That you may praise him therewith; that all your conversation may be, for the time to come, "meet to minister grace to the hearers." Such conversation and private prayer exceedingly assist each other. By resolutely persisting, according to your little strength, in all works of piety and mercy, you are waiting on God in the old scriptural way. And therein he will come and save you. Do not think he is afar off. He is nigh that justifieth, that sanctifieth. Beware you do not thrust him away from you. Rather say,

"My heart would now receive thee, Lord:
Come in, my Lord, come in!"

Write as often and as freely and fully as you please to
Your affectionate brother and servant.

Avoid Sin.

It is plain God sees it best for you frequently to walk in a thorny path. By this means he aims at destroying your pride of heart and breaking your stubborn will. You have had large experience that there is no substantial or lasting happiness but in him. O, be true to yourself and to your own experience! Do not seek it where it cannot be found. Hew out to yourself no more broken cisterns; but let all the springs of your happiness be in him.

You cannot be too careful to keep out of the way of any thing that has been the occasion of sin. And it is very possible to show civility and moderate respect to any person, without coming in the way of danger. All private conversation may be avoided, and ought to be, at all hazards. Do not run yourself into temptation, and God will deliver you from evil.

Nature and the devil will always oppose private prayer; but it is worth while to break through. That it is a cross will not hinder its being a blessing; nay, often the more reluctance, the greater blessing.

MR. WESLEY'S DOMESTIC RULES.

To Mrs. Sarah Ryan (Mr. Wesley's Housekeeper at Bristol).*

NEWBURY, November 8, 1757.

MY DEAR SISTER: In the hurry of business I had not time to write down what you desired, the rules of our family. So I snatch a few minutes to do it now; and the more cheerfully, because I know you will observe them.

1. The family rises, part at four, part at half an hour after.
2. They breakfast at seven, dine at twelve, and sup at six.
3. They spend the hour from five to six in the evening (after a little joint prayer) in private.
4. They pray together at nine, and then retire to their chambers; so that all are in bed before ten.
5. They observe all Fridays in the year as days of fasting or abstinence.

You, in particular, I advise, Suffer no impertinent visitant, no unprofitable conversation in the house. It is a city set upon a hill, and all that is in it should be "holiness to the Lord."

On what a pinnacle do you stand! You are placed in the eye of all the world, friends and enemies. You have no experience of these things; no knowledge of the people; no advantages of education; not large natural abilities; and are but a novice, as it were, in the ways of God! It requires all the omnipotent love of God to preserve you in your present station. Stand fast in the Lord, and in the power of his might! Show that nothing is too hard for him. Take to thee the whole armor of God, and do and suffer all things through Christ strengthening thee. If you continue teachable and advisable, I know nothing that shall be able to hurt you.

Your affectionate brother.

[* The office of "housekeepers" in some of Mr. Wesley's societies at the time of the date of this letter "was to reside in the houses built in several of the large towns, where both Mr. Wesley and the preachers took up their abode during their stay. They were elderly and pious women, who, being once invested with an official character, extended it sometimes from the house to the church, to the occasional annoyance of the preachers. As married preachers began to occupy the houses, they were at length dispensed with.—See *Watson's Life of Wesley*, p. 174.]

To the Same.

NORWICH, *November, 22, 1757.*

MY DEAR SISTER: May the peace and love of God spring up in your heart, as in time past, and more abundantly! You have refreshed my bowels in the Lord; I feel your words, and praised God on your behalf. I not only excuse but love your simplicity; and whatever freedom you use, it will be welcome.

Surely God will never suffer me to be ashamed of my confidence in you. I have been censured for it by some of your nearest friends; but I cannot repent of it. Will not you put forth all your strength (which indeed is not yours; it is the Spirit of the Father which now worketh in you), 1. In managing all things pertaining to the house so as to adorn the Gospel of God our Saviour? 2. In feeding the sheep he has committed to your immediate care, and carrying the weak and sickly in your bosom? 3. In assisting, quickening, and directing the family at Kingswood, whom I trust you will always bear upon your heart? 4. In reproving, stirring up, or confirming all whom the providence of God shall put into your hands? And, lastly, in watching over and helping forward in the ways of God one who has more need of help than all the rest; and who is always willing to receive it from you, because you always speak the truth in love?

Do you find no interruption or abatement at any time of your joy in the Lord? Do you continually see God, and that without any cloud, or darkness, or mist between? Do you pray without ceasing, without ever being diverted from it by any thing inward or outward? Are you never hindered by any person or thing? by the power or subtlety of Satan, or by the weakness or disorders of the body, pressing down the soul? Can you be thankful for every thing without exception? And do you feel all working together for good? Do you do nothing, great or small, merely to please yourself? Do you feel no touch of any desire or affection but what springs from the pure love of God? Do you speak no words but from a principle of love, and under the guidance of his Spirit? O, how I long to find you unblamable in all things, and holy as He that hath called you is holy!

I am yours, etc.

To the Same.

LONDON, *November 30, 1757.*

MY DEAR SISTER: Your letter came in a seasonable time, as rain in a time of drought. How fain would we excuse those we love! I would gladly acquit those who severely condemn each other. The wrong to myself is not worth a thought; it gives me not a moment's uneasiness. But I am pained for others, who, if they do not sin against God, yet give great occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.

You may learn an excellent lesson herefrom. Suppose you are

saved from sin, it is certain that you are not saved from a possibility of mistake. On this side, therefore, Satan may assault you; you may be deceived either as to persons or things. You may think better, or (which is far more strange) you may think worse of them than they deserve. And hence words or actions may spring, which, if not sinful in you, are certainly wrong in themselves; and which will and must appear sinful to those who cannot read your heart. What grievous inconvenience would ensue! How would the good that is in you be evil spoken of! How would the great gift of God be doubted of, if not disbelieved and denied, for your cause! Therefore, in the name of God I exhort you, keep close every moment to the unction of the Holy One! Attend to the still small voice! Beware of hearkening to the voice of a stranger! My eyes ache, my head aches, my heart aches. And yet I know not when to have done. O, speak nothing, act nothing, think nothing, but as you are taught of God!

Still may he with your weakness stay,
Nor for a moment's space depart;
Evil and danger turn away,
And keep your hand, your tongue, your heart.

So shall you always comfort, not grieve,
Your affectionate brother.

CONVICTION NOT CONDEMNATION.

November 11, 1760.

Conviction is not condemnation. You may be convinced, yet not condemned; convinced of useless thoughts or words, and yet not condemned for them. You are condemned for nothing if you love God, and continue to give him your whole heart.

Certainly, spiritual temptations will pass through your spirit, else you could not feel them. I believe I understand your state better than you do yourself. Do not perplex yourself at all about what you shall call it. You are a child of God, a member of Christ, an heir of the kingdom. What you have hold fast (whatever name is given to it), and you shall have all that God has prepared for them that love him. Certainly you do need more faith; for you are a tender, sickly plant. But see,

Faith while yet you ask is given,
God comes down, the God and Lord,
That made both earth and heaven!

You cannot live on what he did yesterday. Therefore he comes to-day! He comes to destroy that tendency to levity, to severe judging, to any thing that is not of God. Peace be with your spirit!

THE GRAND MEANS OF HOLINESS.

December 12, 1760.

You may blame yourself, but I will not blame you, for seeking to have your every temper and thought and word and work

suitable to the will of God. But I doubt not you seek this by faith, not without it; and you seek it in and through Christ, not without him. Go on; you shall have all you seek; because God is love. He is showing you the littleness of your understanding and the foolishness of all natural wisdom. Certainly peace and joy in believing are the grand means of holiness; therefore, love and value them as such.

“Why is the law of works superseded by the law of love?” Because Christ died. “Why are we not condemned for coming short even of this?” Because he lives and intercedes for us. I believe it is impossible not to come short of it, through the unavoidable littleness of our understanding. Yet the blood of the covenant is upon us, and therefore there is no condemnation.

I think the extent of the law of love is exactly marked out in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. Let faith fill your heart with love to Him and all mankind; then follow this loving faith to the best of your understanding; meantime crying out continually, “Jesus is all in all to me.”

PERFECTION.

Letter to Miss Furley.

ST. IVES, *September 15, 1762.*

MY DEAR SISTER: Whereunto you have attained, hold fast. But expect that greater things are at hand; although our friend talks as if you were not to expect them till the article of death.

Certainly sanctification (in the proper sense) is “an instantaneous deliverance from all sin,” and includes “an instantaneous power then given, always to cleave to God.” Yet this sanctification (at least, in the lower degrees) does not include a power never to think a useless thought, nor ever speak a useless word. I myself believe that such a perfection is inconsistent with living in a corruptible body: for this makes it impossible “always to think right.” While we breathe we shall, more or less, mistake. If, therefore, Christian perfection implies this, we must not expect it till after death.

I want you to be all love. This is the perfection I believe and teach. And this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders, which that high strained perfection is not. Indeed, my judgment is, that (in this case particularly) to overdo is to undo; and that to set perfection too high (so high as no man that we ever heard or read of attained) is the most effectual (because unsuspected) way of driving it out of the world.

Take care you are not hurt by any thing in the *Short Hymns* contrary to the doctrines you have long received. Peace be with your spirit! I am

Your affectionate brother.

INWARD CLEANSING.

*To Mr. John Valton.*LONDON, *June 30, 1764.*

It is certainly right, with all possible care, to abstain from all outward occasions of evil. But this profits only a little; the inward change is the one thing needful for you. You must be born again; or you will never gain a uniform and lasting liberty.

Your whole soul is diseased, or rather dead—dead to God—dead in sin. Awake then, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. To seek for a particular deliverance from one sin only is mere lost labor. If it could be attained, it would be of little worth, for another would rise in its place; but indeed it cannot, before there is a general deliverance from the guilt and power of all sin. This is the thing which you want, and which you should be continually seeking for. You want to be freely justified from all things through the redemption that is in Jesus. It might be of use if you would read over the first volume of Sermons, seriously, and with prayer. Indeed, nothing will avail without prayer. Pray, whether you can or not: when you are cheerful, when you are heavy, pray; with many or few words, or none at all. You will surely find an answer of peace. And why not now? I am

Your servant for Christ's sake.

THE PLAY-HOUSE CONDEMNED.

LONDON, *December 20, 1764.*

DEAR BROTHER: I suppose it is of little consequence in whose hand this is transcribed. Let it be accompanied by prayer, and good must follow one way or the other. Let us work while the day is. Adieu!

To the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol.

GENTLEMEN: Both my brother and I, and all who have any connection with us, are extremely sensible of our obligations to you for the civility which you have shown us on all occasions; and we cannot but feel ourselves deeply interested in whatever we apprehend in any degree to concern your honor or the general good and prosperity of the city of Bristol. This occasions my giving you the present trouble, which (whether it has any farther effect or no) you will please to receive as a testimony of the high regard which we shall ever retain for you.

The endeavors lately used to procure subscriptions for building a new play-house in Bristol have given us not a little concern; and that on various accounts; not barely as most of the present stage entertainments sap the foundation of all religion, as they naturally tend to efface all traces of piety and seriousness out of the minds of men; but as they are peculiarly hurtful to a trading city; giving a wrong turn to youth, especially gay, trifling, and

directly opposite to the spirit of industry and close application to business; and as drinking and debauchery of every kind are constant attendants on these entertainments, with indolence, effeminacy, and idleness, which affect trade in a high degree.

It was on these very considerations that the corporation of Nottingham lately withstood all solicitations, and absolutely forbade the building of a new theater there; being determined to encourage nothing of the kind. And I doubt not but thousands will reap the benefit of their wise and generous resolution.

It does not become me, gentlemen, to press any thing upon you; but I could not avoid saying thus much, both in behalf of myself and all my friends. Wishing you the continuance and increase of every blessing, I remain, gentlemen, your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

BE A WHOLE CHRISTIAN.

To Lady Maxwell.

LONDONDERRY, *May 25, 1765.*

MY DEAR LADY: It is not easy for me to express the satisfaction I received in the few hours I lately spent with you. Before I saw you I had many fears concerning you, lest your concern for the one thing should be abated, lest your desires should be cooled or your mind a little hurt by any of the things which have lately occurred. So much the greater was my joy when all those fears were removed, when I found the same openness and sweetness as before, both in your spirit and conversation, and the same earnestness of desire after the only thing which deserves the whole strength of our affection. I believe tenderness and steadiness are seldom planted by nature in one spirit. But what is too hard for Almighty grace? This can give strength and softness together. This is able to fill your soul with all firmness as well as with all gentleness. And hereunto are you called, for nothing less than all the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

It was with great pleasure that I observed your fixed resolution not to rest in any thing short of this. I know not why you should; why you should be content with being half a Christian, devoted partly to God and partly to the world, or more properly to the devil. Nay, but let us be all for God. He has created the whole, our whole body, soul, and spirit. He that bought us hath redeemed the whole, and let him take the purchase of his blood. Let him sanctify the whole, that all we have and are may be a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving!

I am not afraid of your being satisfied with less than this, but I am afraid of your seeking it the wrong way. Here is the danger, that you should seek it, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. See how exactly the apostle speaks: You do not seek it directly, but, as it were, by works. I fear lest this should be your case, which might retard your receiving the blessing. Christ has died for you, he has brought pardon for you. Why

should not you receive it now? while you have this paper in your hand? Because you have not done thus or thus? See your own works. Because you are not thus and thus? more contrite? more earnest? more sincere? See your own righteousness. O, let it all go! None but Christ! None but Christ! And if he alone is sufficient, if what he has suffered and done, if his blood and righteousness are enough, they are nigh thee! in thy mouth and in thy heart! See all things are ready! Do not wait for this or that preparation! for some thing to bring to God! Bring Christ! Rather, let him bring you; bring you home to God! Lord Jesus, take her! Take her and all her sins! Take her as she is! Take her now! Arise, why tarriest thou? Wash away her sins! Sprinkle her with thy blood! Let her sink down into the arms of thy love and cry out, "My Lord and my God!"

Let me hear from you as soon as you can. You do not know how great a satisfaction this is to, my dear lady,

Your ever affectionate servant.

PREJUDICE.

LONDON, *December 1, 1765.*

MY DEAR LADY MAXWELL: Perhaps there is scarce any child of man that is not at some time a little touched by prejudice, so far, at least, as to be troubled though not wounded. But it does not hurt unless it fixes upon the mind. It is not strength of understanding which can prevent this. The heart, which otherwise suffers most by it, makes the resistance which only is effectual. I cannot easily be prejudiced against any person whom I tenderly love till that love declines. So long, therefore, as our affection is preserved by watchfulness and prayer to Him that gave it, prejudice must stand at a distance. Another excellent defense against it is openness. I admire you upon this account. You dare (in spite of that strange reserve which so prevails in North Britain) speak the naked sentiments of your heart. I hope my dear friend will never do otherwise. In simplicity and godly sincerity, the very reverse of worldly wisdom, have all your conversation in the world.

Have you received a gleam of light from above, a spark of faith? O, let it not go! Hold fast, by his grace, that token of his love, that earnest of your inheritance. Come just as you are, and come boldly to the throne of grace. You need not delay! Even now the bowels of Jesus Christ yearn over you. What have you to do with to-morrow? I love you to-day. And how much more does he love you! He

Pities still his wand'ring sheep,
Longs to bring you to his fold!

To-day hear his voice; the voice of him that speaks as never man spake; the voice that raises the dead, that calls the things which are not as though they were. Hark! What says he now? "Fear

not ; only believe ! Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee ! Go in peace ; thy faith hath made the whole." Indeed, I am, my dear lady,
Your ever affectionate servant.

ADVICE TO DR. COKE.

November 18, 1765.

Only one thing I desire you to remember, Never sit up later than ten o'clock ; no, not for any reason (except a watch-night), not on any pretense whatsoever. In general, I desire you would go to bed about a quarter after nine.

Likewise, be temperate in speaking ; never too loud, never too long ; else Satan will befool you, and on pretense of being more useful, quite disable you from being useful at all.

PREACH PERFECTION.

To Mr. Merriweather.

February 8, 1766.

MY DEAR BROTHER : Where Christian perfection is not strongly and explicitly preached there is seldom any remarkable blessing from God ; and, consequently, little addition to the society and little life in the members of it. Therefore, if Jacob Rowell is grown faint and says but little about it, do *you* supply his lack of service. Speak and spare not. Let not regard for any man induce you to betray the truth of God. Till you press the believers to expect full salvation *now*, you must not look for any revival.

It is certain God does at some times, without any cause known to us, shower down his grace in an extraordinary manner. And he does in some instances delay to give either justifying or sanctifying grace, for reasons which are not discovered to us. These are some of those secrets of his government which it hath pleased him to reserve in his own breast. I hope you and your wife keep all you have, and grasp for more. I am

Your affectionate brother.

SELF-CONCEIT REBUKED.

To Mrs. R——.

WHITEHAVEN, June 28, 1766.

MY DEAR SISTER : For some time I have been convinced it was my duty to tell you what was on my mind. I will do it with all plainness. You may answer or not, as you judge best.

Many things I have observed in you which gave me pleasure, some which gave me concern ; the former I need not mention ; the latter I must, or I should not myself be clear before God.

The first of these is something which looks like pride. You sometimes seem to think too highly of yourself, and (comparatively) to despise others. I will instance in two or three particulars :

1. You appear to be above instruction, I mean instruction from man. I do not doubt but you are taught of God. But that does

not supersede your being taught by man also. I believe there is no saint upon earth whom God does not teach by man.

2. You appear to think (I will not affirm you do) that none understands the doctrine of sanctification like you. Nay, you sometimes speak as if none understood it beside you ; whereas (whether you experience more or less of it than some), I know several, both men and women, who both think and speak full as scripturally of it as you do, and perhaps more clearly ; for there is often something dark and confused in your manner of speaking concerning it.

3. You appear to undervalue the experience of almost every one in comparison of your own. To this it seems to be owing that you some way or other beat down almost all who believe they are saved from sin. And so some of them were, in the only sense wherein I either teach or believe it, unless they tell flat and willful lies in giving an account of their experience.

A second thing which has given me concern is, I am afraid you are in danger of enthusiasm. We know there are divine dreams and impressions. But how easily may you be deceived herein ! How easily where something is from God may we mix something which is from nature ! especially if we have a lively imagination and are not aware of any danger.

I will mention one thing more. It has frequently been said, and with some appearance of truth, that you endeavor to monopolize the affections of all that fall into your hands ; that you destroy the nearest and dearest connection they had before, and make them quite cool and indifferent to their most intimate friends. I do not at all speak on my own account, I set myself out of the question. But if there be any thing of the kind with regard to other people, I should be sorry both for them and you.

I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace. I am,
 my dear sister, Your affectionate brother.

THE ESSENTIAL PART OF HOLINESS.

To Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis.

DUBLIN, *July 25, 1767.*

DEAR SISTER BENNIS : When you write to me you have only to "think aloud," just to open the window in your breast ; when we love one another there is no need of either disguise or reserve. I love you, and I verily believe you love me ; so you have only to write just what you feel.

The essential part of Christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God ; and certainly we need not lose any degree of that light and love which at first attend this : it is our own infirmity if we do ; it is not the will of the Lord concerning us. Your present business is, not to reason whether you should call your experience thus or thus, but to go straight to Him that loves you with all your wants, how great or how many soever they are. Then all things are ready ; help, while you ask, is given. You

have only to receive it by simple faith. Nevertheless, you will still be encompassed with numberless infirmities ; for you live in a house of clay, and, therefore, this corruptible body will, more or less, press down the soul, yet not so as to prevent your rejoicing evermore, and having a witness that your heart is all his. You may claim this; it is yours ; for Christ is yours. Believe and feel him near. My dear sister, adieu. Yours affectionately.

CONVERSATION.

To the Reverend John Fletcher.

BIRMINGHAM, *March 20, 1768.*

DEAR SIR : I was told yesterday that you are sick of the conversation even of them who profess religion; that you find it quite unprofitable, if not hurtful, to converse with them three or four hours together; and are sometimes almost determined to shut yourself up as the less evil of the two.

I do not wonder at it at all, especially considering with whom you have chiefly conversed for some time past, namely, the hearers of Mr. — and Mr. —. The conversing with them I have rarely found to be profitable to my soul. Rather, it has damped my desires and has cooled my resolutions, and I have commonly left them with a dry, dissipated spirit.

And how can you expect it to be otherwise? For do we not naturally catch their spirit with whom we converse? And what spirit can we expect them to be of, considering the preaching they sit under? Some happy exceptions I allow ; but, in general, do men gather grapes of thorns? Do they gather the necessity of inward and outward self-devotion, of constant, universal self-denial, or of the patience of hope, or the labor of love, from the doctrine they hear? Do they gather from that amorous way of praying to Christ, or that lucious way of preaching his righteousness, any real holiness? I never found it so. On the contrary, I have found that even the precious doctrine of salvation by faith has need to be guarded with the greatest care, or those who hear it will slight both inward and outward holiness.

I will go a step farther. I seldom find it profitable to converse with any who are not athirst for full salvation, and who are not big with earnest expectation of receiving it every moment. Now, you find none of these among those we are speaking of; but many, on the contrary, who are in various ways, directly or indirectly, opposing this blessed work of God ; the work, I mean, which God is carrying on throughout this kingdom by unlearned and plain men.

You have for some time conversed a good deal with the genteel Methodists. Now, it matters not a straw what doctrine they hear, whether they frequent the Lock or West Street, if they are as salt which has lost its savor, if they are conformed to the maxims, the spirit, the fashions, and customs of the world. Certainly, then, if you converse much with such persons you will return less a man than you were before.

But were either the one or the other of ever so excellent a spirit, you conversed with them too long. One had need to be an angel, not a man, to converse three or four hours at once to any good purpose. In the latter part of such a conversation we shall be in great danger of losing all the profit we had gained before.

But have you not a remedy for all this in your hands? In order to converse profitably, may you not select a few persons who stand in awe of Him they love; persons who are vigorously working out their salvation, who are athirst for full redemption, and every moment expecting it if not already enjoying it?

Though it is true these will generally be poor and mean, seldom possessed of either riches or learning, unless there be now and then one of higher rank, if you converse with such as these humbly and simply, an hour at a time, with earnest prayer for a blessing, you will not complain of the unprofitableness of conversation or find any need of turning hermit.

Do you not observe that all the lay preachers who are connected with me are maintainers of general redemption? And it is undeniable that they are instrumental of saving souls. God is with them, and he works by them, and he has done so for near these thirty years; therefore, the opposing them is neither better nor worse than fighting against God. I am

Your ever affectionate brother.

WATCH AND PRAY.

To Jane Hilton.

LISBURN, *April 9, 1769.*

MY DEAR SISTER: I thank Brother Barton for his letter. Both of you have now more need than ever continually to watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. There will be a great danger of so cleaving to each other as to forget God, or of being so taken up with a creature as to abate your hunger and thirst after righteousness. There will be a danger likewise of whiling away time; of not improving it to the uttermost; of spending more of it than needs in good sort of *talk* with each other, which yet does not quicken your souls. If you should once get into a habit of this, it will be exceeding hard to break it off. Therefore, you should now attend to every step you take, that you may begin as you hope to hold on to the end. And beware you are not entangled with worldly care any more than worldly desire. Be careful for nothing, but in every thing make your request known to God with thanksgiving.

Your affectionate brother.

SOME PLAIN WORDS.

To Mr. S., at Armagh.

April 24, 1769.

DEAR BROTHER: I shall now tell you the things which have been more or less upon my mind ever since I have been in the north of Ireland. If you forget them, you will be a sufferer, and

so will the people ; if you observe them, it will be good for both.

1. To begin with little things. If you regard your health, touch no supper but a little milk or water gruel. This will entirely, by the blessing of God, secure you from nervous disorders ; especially if you rise early every morning, whether you preach or no.

2. Be steadily serious. There no country upon earth where this is more necessary than Ireland ; as you are generally encompassed with those who, with a little encouragement, would laugh or trifle from morning to night.

3. In every town visit all you can from house to house. I say, *all you can* ; for there will be some whom you cannot visit ; and if you examine, instruct, reprove, exhort, as need requires, you will have no time hanging on your hands. It is by this means that the societies are increased wherever T. R. goes ; he is preaching from morning to night, warning every one, that he may present every one perfect in Christ Jesus.

4. But on this and every other occasion avoid all familiarity with women. This is deadly poison both to them and you. You cannot be too wary in this respect ; therefore, begin from this hour.

5. The chief matter of your conversation, as well as your preaching, should doubtless be the weightier matters of the law. Yet there are several (comparatively) little things which you should earnestly inculcate from time to time ; “for he that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little.” Such are,

(1) Be active, be diligent ; avoid all laziness, sloth, indolence. Fly from every degree, every appearance of it ; else you will never be more than half a Christian.

(2) Be cleanly. In this let the Methodists take pattern by the Quakers. Avoid all nastiness, dirt, slovenliness, both in your person, clothes, house, and all about you. Do not stink above ground. This is a bad fruit of laziness ; use all diligence to be clean, as one says :

“Let thy mind’s sweetness have its operation
Upon thy person, clothes, and habitation.”

(3) Whatever clothes you have, let them be whole ; no rents, no tatters, no rags. These are a scandal to either man or woman, being another fruit of vile laziness. Mend your clothes, or I shall never expect you to mend your lives. Let none ever see a ragged Methodist.

(4) Clean yourselves of lice. These are a proof both of uncleanness and laziness ; take pains in this. Do not cut off your hair, but clean it and keep it clean.

(5) Cure yourself and your family of the itch ; a spoonful of brimstone will cure you. To let this run from year to year proves both sloth and uncleanness. Away with it at once. Let not the north be any longer a proverb of reproach to all the nation.

(6) Use no tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician. It is an uncleanly and unwholesome self-indulgence, and the more customary

it is, the more resolutely should you break off from every degree of that evil custom.

(7) Use no snuff, unless prescribed by a physician. I suppose no other nation in Europe is in such vile bondage to this silly, nasty, dirty custom as the Irish are. But let Christians be in this bondage no longer. Assert your liberty, and that all at once; nothing will be done by degrees. But just now you may break loose through Christ strengthening you.

(8) Touch no dram. It is liquid fire. It is a sure, though slow, poison. It saps the very springs of life. In Ireland, above all countries in the world, I would sacredly abstain from this, because the evil is so general, and to this and snuff and smoky cabins I impute the blindness which is so exceeding common throughout the nation.

I might have inserted under the second article what I particularly desire wherever you have preaching—namely, that there may be a little house. Let this be got without delay. Wherever it is not, let none expect to see me. I am

Your affectionate brother.

ALL-CONQUERING FAITH.

Letter to Miss Bishop.

November 5, 1770.

MY DEAR SISTER: I am glad you had such success in your labor of love: in all things you shall reap, if you faint not. And the promise is, "They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." How does the little society prosper? Are you all united in love? And are you all aware of that bane of love, tale bearing and evil speaking? Do you retain that little spark of faith? Are you going forward, and have you as strong a desire as ever "to increase with all the increase of God?"

See the Lord, thy keeper, stand,
Omnipotently near!
Lo, he holds thee by thy hand,
And banishes thy fear!

O, trust him, love him, and praise him!

I know not that you have any thing to do with fear. Your continual prayer should be for faith and love. I admired a holy man in France, who, considering the state of one who was full of doubts and fears, forbade him to think of his sins at all, and ordered him to think only of the love of God in Christ. The fruit was, all his fears vanished away, and he lived and died in the triumphs of faith.

Faith is sight—that is, spiritual sight—and it is light and not darkness; so that the famous popish phrase, "The darkness of faith," is a contradiction in terms. O, beware of all who talk in that unscriptural manner, or they will perplex, if not destroy, you! I cannot find in my Bible any such sin as legality.

Truly, we have been often afraid where no fear was. I am not half legal enough, not enough under the law of love. Sometimes there is painful conviction of sin, preparatory to full sanctification; sometimes a conviction that has far more pleasure than pain, being mixed with joyful expectation. Always there should be a gradual growth in grace; which need never be intermitted from the time we are justified. Do not wait therefore for pain or any thing else, but simply for all-conquering faith. The more freely you write, the more satisfaction you will give to

Your affectionate brother.

PASSION AND PREJUDICE.

Letter to Joseph Benson, 1770.

“Child,” said my father to me, when I was young, “you think to carry every thing by dint of argument. But you will find, by and by, how very little is ever done in the world by clear reason.” Very little indeed! It is true of almost all men, except so far as we are taught of God.

Against experience we believe,
We argue against demonstration;
Pleased while our reason we deceive,
And set our judgment by our passion.

Passion and prejudice govern the world, only under the name of reason. It is our part, by religion and reason joined, to counteract them all we can. It is yours, in particular, to do all that in you lies to soften the prejudices of those that are round about you, and to calm the passions from which they spring. Blessed are the peacemakers!

LOVE AND LIBERTY.

From Letter to Joseph Benson,

October 5, 1770.

You judge rightly: perfect love and Christian liberty are the very same thing; and those two expressions are equally proper, being equally scriptural. “Nay, how can they and you mean the same thing? They say you insist on holiness in the creature, on good tempers, and sin destroyed.” Most surely. And what is Christian liberty but another word for holiness? And where is this liberty or holiness if it is not in the creature? Holiness is the love of God and man, or the mind which was in Christ. Now, I trust, the love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto you. And if you are holy, is not that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus?

And are not the love of God and our neighbor good tempers? And so far as these reign in the soul, are not the opposite tempers—worldly-mindedness, malice, cruelty, revengefulness—destroyed? Indeed, the unclean spirit, though driven out, may return and enter again; nevertheless, he was driven out. I use the word *destroyed* because St. Paul does; *suspended* I cannot

find in my Bible. "But they say you do not consider this as the consequence of the power of Christ dwelling in us." Then what will they not say? My very words are, "None feel their need of Christ like these; none so entirely depend upon him. For Christ does not give light to the soul separate from, but in and with, himself. Hence his words are equally true of all men, in whatever state of grace they are: 'As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. Without' (or separate from) 'me ye can do nothing.' For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but severed from it, is 'dried up and withered.'"

STAND FAST.

To Jane Hilton.

TEWKESBURY, March 15, 1770.

MY DEAR SISTER: I rejoice to hear that you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free; and the more because, although many taste of that heavenly gift, deliverance from inbred sin, yet so few, so exceeding few, retain it one year; hardly one in ten; nay, one in thirty. Many hundreds in London were made partakers of it within sixteen or eighteen months; but I doubt whether twenty of them are now as holy and as happy as they were. And hence others had doubted whether God *intended that salvation* to be enjoyed long. That many *have it* for a season, that they allow; but are not satisfied that any *retain it* always. Shall not you, for one? You will if you watch and pray and continue hanging upon him. Then you will always give matter of rejoicing to

Your affectionate brother.

BE NOT MOVED.

To Jane Hilton.

May 8, 1770.

MY DEAR SISTER: Two things are certain: the one, that it is possible to lose even the pure love of God; the other, that it is not necessary, it is not unavoidable; it may be lost, but it may be kept. Accordingly, we have some, in every part of the kingdom, who have never been moved from their steadfastness. And from this moment you need never be moved: His grace is sufficient for you. But you must continue to grow, if you continue to stand; for no one can stand still. And is it not your Lord's will concerning you that you should daily receive a fresh increase of love? And see that you labor so much the more to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to confirm the wavering, and recover them that are out of the way. In June I hope to see you. Peace be with your spirits! I am

Your affectionate brother.

PRAYER.

To Jane Hilton.

NORWICH, November 5, 1770.

MY DEAR SISTER: For many years I had a kind of scruple with regard to praying for temporal things. But three or four years ago I was thoroughly persuaded that scruple was unnecessary. Being then straitened much, I made it matter of prayer; and I had an immediate answer. It is true we can only ask outward blessings with reserve: "If this is best; if it be thy will." And in this manner we may certainly plead the promise, "All these things shall be added unto you."

SANCTIFICATION NECESSARY.

To Mrs. Bennis.

ASHBY, July 27, 1770.

DEAR SISTER: Will you ever find in yourself any thing but unfitness? Otherwise your salvation would be of works, not of grace. But you are frequently sick of a bad disease—evil reasoning; which hinders both your holiness and happiness. You want the true Christian simplicity, which is indeed the highest wisdom. Nothing is more clear, according to the plain Bible account, than sanctification; pure love reigning in the heart and life. And nothing is more plain than the necessity of this, in order to feel happiness here and hereafter. Check all reasoning concerning these first principles, else you will exceedingly darken your soul; and go on denying yourself, and taking up your cross, until you

Sink into perfection's height,
The depth of humble love.

Still draw near to the fountain by simple faith, and take all you want; but be not slothful in your Lord's vineyard. My dear sister,
Yours affectionately.

SIN IN BELIEVERS.

Letter to Joseph Benson.

LONDON, December 28, 1770.

DEAR JOSEPH: What a blessing it is that we can speak freely to each other, without either disguise or reserve! So long as we are able to do this, we may grow wiser and better every day.

One point I advise you to hold fast, and let neither men nor devils tear it from you. You are a child of God; you are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Your sins are forgiven! Cast not away that confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Now, can any be justified but by faith? None can. Therefore you are a believer; you have faith in Christ; you know the Lord; you can say, "My Lord and my God." And whoever denies this may as well deny that the sun shines at noonday.

Yet still ten thousand lusts remain,
 And vex your soul, absolved from sin;
 Still rebel nature strives to reign,
 And you are all unclean, unclean!

This is equally clear and undeniable. And this is not your experience, but the experience of a thousand believers besides, who yet are sure of God's favor, as of their own existence. To cut off all doubt on this head I beg you to give another serious reading to those two sermons, "Sin in Believers," and "The Repentance of Believers."

"But is there no help? Is there no deliverance, no salvation from this inbred enemy?" Surely there is; else many great and precious promises must fall to the ground. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." "I will circumcise thy heart" (from all sin) "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." This I term sanctification (which is both an instantaneous and a gradual work), or perfection, the being perfected in love, filled with love, which still admits of a thousand degrees. But I have no time to throw away in contending for words; especially where the thing is allowed. And you allow the whole thing which I contend for; an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this; yea, to give it you in an instant. You trust he will. O, hold fast this also; this blessed hope, which he has wrought in your heart! And with all zeal and diligence confirm the brethren, 1. In holding fast that whereto they have attained; namely, the remission of all their sins by faith in a bleeding Lord. 2. In expecting a second change, whereby they shall be saved from all sin, and perfected in love.

If they like to call this "receiving the Holy Ghost," they may; only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural, and not quite proper; for they all "received the Holy Ghost" when they were justified. God then "sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

O, Joseph, keep close to the Bible, both as to sentiment and expression! Then there will never be any material difference between you and
 Your affectionate brother.

ANGER.

What you feel is certainly a degree of anger, but not of sinful anger; there ought to be in us (as there was in our Lord) not barely a perception in the understanding that this or that is evil, but also an emotion of mind, a sensation or passion suitable thereto. This anger at sin, accompanied with love and compassion to the sinner, is so far from being itself a sin that it is rather a duty. St. Paul's word is, "not easily provoked" to any paroxysm of anger; neither are you. Nevertheless, I suppose

there is in you, when you feel a proper anger at sin, a hurrying motion of the blood and spirits, which is an imperfection, and will be done away. (1771.)

ALWAYS DO RIGHT.

GALWAY, May 20, 1771.

Your concern is with the present moment; your business is to live to-day. In every sense let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. It is true the full assurance of hope excludes all doubt of our final salvation; but it does not, and cannot, continue any longer than we walk closely with God. And it does not include any assurance of our future behavior; neither do I know any word in all the Bible which gives us any authority to look for a testimony of this kind. But just so far you may certainly go, with regard to the present moment.

“I want the witness, Lord,
That all I do is right,
According to thy will and word,
Well pleasing in thy sight.”

Seriously and steadily, my dear maid, aim at this, and you will not be disappointed of your hope. With regard to the impression you speak of, I am in doubt whether it be not a temptation from the enemy. It may occasion many wrong tempers; it may feed both pride and uncharitableness. And the Bible gives us no authority to think ill of any one but from plain, undeniable, overt acts.

PURE LOVE.

Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God. The refiner's fire purges out all that is contrary to love, and that many times by a pleasing smart. Leave all this to Him that does all things well, and that loves you better than you do yourself. (1771.)

FULL SALVATION BEFORE DEATH.

To Mrs. Mary Savage, of Worcester.

BRISTOL, August 31, 1771.

MY DEAR SISTER: Right precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints! And I believe many of the blessings which we receive are in answer to their dying prayers. It is well if the great change be wrought in a soul even a little before it leaves the body. But how much more desirable it is that it should be wrought long before, that we may long glorify Him with our body and with our spirit! O, exhort all whom you have access to not to delay the time of embracing all the great and precious promises! Frankly tell all those that are simple of heart what he has done for your soul; and then urge,

“May not every sinner find
The grace which found out me?”

SANCTIFIED CROSSES.

To Miss Mary Stokes.

LONDON, December 26, 1771.

MY DEAR SISTER: Sanctified crosses are blessings indeed; and when it is best, our Lord will remove them. A peculiar kind of watching, to which you are now called, is against the suggestions of that wicked one, who would persuade you to deny or undervalue the grace of God which is in you. Beware of mistaking *his* voice for the voice of the Holy One. Do justice to Him that lives and reigns in you, and acknowledge his work with thankfulness. There is no pride in doing this; it is only giving him his due, rendering him the glory of his own graces. But in order to this, you stand in continual need of the unction to abide with you and teach you of all things. So shall you never lose any thing of what God has given; neither the blessing itself, nor the witness of it. Nay, rather you shall sink deeper and deeper into his love; you shall go on from faith to faith; and patience shall have its perfect work, until you are perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

AVOID CONTROVERSY.

To Lady Maxwell.

LONDON, February 8, 1772.

MY DEAR LADY: I commend you for meddling with points of controversy as little as possible. It is abundantly easier to lose our love in that rough field than to find truth. This consideration has made me exceedingly thankful to God for giving me a respite from polemical labors. I am glad he has given to others both the power and the will to answer them that trouble me; so that I may not always be forced to hold my weapons in one hand, while I am building with the other. I rejoice, likewise, not only in the abilities but in the temper of Mr. Fletcher. He writes as he lives. I cannot say that I know such another clergyman in England or Ireland. He is all fire; but it is the fire of love. His writings, like his constant conversation, breathe nothing else to those who read him with an impartial eye. And although Mr. Shirley scruples not to charge him with using subtilty and metaphysical distinctions, yet he abundantly clears himself of this charge in the *Second Check to Antinomianism*. Such the last letters are styled, and with great propriety; for such they have really been. They have given a considerable check to those who were every-where making void the law through faith; setting "the righteousness of Christ" in opposition to the law of Christ, and teaching that "without holiness any man may see the Lord."

Notwithstanding both outward and inward trials, I trust you are still on the borders of perfect love. For the Lord is nigh!

See the Lord thy Keeper stand
 Omnipotently near!
 Lo! he holds thee by thy hand,
 And banishes thy fear!

You have no need of fear. Hope unto the end! Are not all things possible to him that believeth? Dare to believe! Seize a blessing now! The Lord increase your faith! In this prayer I know you join with,

My dear lady,
 Your ever affectionate servant.

PRESS ON.

To a Young Disciple.

LEITH, May 13, 1772.

To set the state of perfection too high is the surest way to drive it out of the world. The substance of that test, I believe, I have seen; and I judge it not consistent with humanity; I mean with the state of a human soul, as long as it is united to a corruptible body. Do not puzzle yourself any more with these nice inquiries; but, in order to re-settle your judgment, give another deliberate reading to the *Farther Thoughts* or the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. He that long ago gave you to taste of his pardoning love gave you afterward a taste of his pure love. Whereunto you have attained, hold fast; never cast it away through a voluntary humility. But see that you do not rest there. Comparatively, forget the things that are behind. Reach forward! This one thing do: press on to the prize of your high calling.

RELIGIOUS GOSSIP.

To a Young Disciple.

WHITBY, June 20, 1772.

It is of admirable use to bear the weaknesses, nay, and even the faults, of the real children of God. And the temptations to anger which rise herefrom are often more profitable than any other. Yet surely, for the present, they are not joyous, but grievous; afterward comes the peaceable fruit. You shall have exactly as much pain and as much disappointment as will be most for your profit and just sufficient to

Keep you dead to all below,
 Only Christ resolved to know.

Never make it matter of reasoning that you have not either a larger or a smaller share of suffering. You shall have exactly what is best both as to kind, degree, and time. O, what a blessing is it to be in his hand who "doeth all things well!"

Of all gossiping, religious gossiping is the worst: it adds hypocrisy to uncharitableness, and effectually does the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. The leaders in every society may do much toward driving it out from among the Methodists.

Let them, in the band or class, observe, 1. "Now we are to talk of no absent person, but simply of God and our own souls." 2. "The rule of our conversation here is to be the rule of all our conversation. Let us observe it (unless in some necessarily exempt cases) at all times and in all places." If this be frequently inculcated, it will have an excellent effect.

Instead of giving a caution once, as to a grown person, you must give it to a child ten times. By this means you may keep a sensible child from an improper familiarity with servants. Cautions should also be given frequently and earnestly to the servants themselves; and they will not always be thrown away, if they have either grace or sense.

WHAT SIN IS.

Letter to Mrs. Bennis.

June 16, 1772.

Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore, every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin; and nothing else, if we speak properly. To strain the matter farther is only to make way for Calvinism. There may be ten thousand wandering thoughts and forgetful intervals without any breach of love, though not without transgressing the Adamic law. But Calvinists would fain confound these together. Let love fill your heart, and it is enough!

ANGELIC MINISTRIES.

Letter to Miss Bishop.

June 12, 1773.

MY DEAR SISTER: "True simplicity," Fénelon says, "is that grace whereby the soul is delivered from all unprofitable reflections upon itself." I add, "and upon all other persons and things." This is an unspeakable blessing. And it is the mere gift of God, not naturally annexed either to greatness or littleness of understanding. A single eye is a great help to this. Seek one thing, and you will be far less troubled with unprofitable reasonings.

It has, in all ages, been allowed that the communion of saints extends to those in paradise, as well as those upon earth; as they are all one body united under one head. And

Can death's interposing tide
Spirits one in Christ divide?

But it is difficult to say either what kind or what degree of union may be between them. It is not improbable their fellowship with us is far more sensible than ours with them. Suppose any of them are present, they are hid from our eyes, but we are not hid from their sight. They, no doubt, clearly discern all our words and actions, if not all our thoughts, too. For it is hard to think these walls of flesh and blood can intercept the view of an angelic

being. But we have, in general, only a faint and indistinct perception of their presence, unless in some peculiar instances, where it may answer some gracious ends of divine providence. Then it may please God to permit that they should be perceptible, either by some of our outward senses, or by an internal sense, for which human language has not any name. But I suppose this is not a common blessing. I have known but few instances of it. To keep up constant and close communion with God is the most likely means to obtain this also.

Whatever designs a man has, whatever he is proposing to do, either for himself or his friends, when his spirit goes hence all is at an end. And it is in this sense only that "all our thoughts perish." Otherwise, all our thoughts and designs, though not carried into execution, are noted in his book who accepts us according to our willing mind, and rewards intentions as well as actions. By aiming at him in all things, by studying to please him in all your thoughts, words, and actions, you are continually sowing to the Spirit, and of the Spirit you will reap life everlasting. I am

Your affectionate brother.

SIMPLICITY.

To Miss Bolton.

LONDON, August 8, 1773.

MY DEAR SISTER: It gives me much pleasure to observe that you do not lose your simplicity. You seem not only to retain simplicity of spirit (the great thing), but likewise of sentiment and language. God has indeed dealt very graciously with you from the beginning hitherto. He has led you tenderly by the hand from grace to grace, and from faith to faith; and you may well say,

"The mercy I feel to others I show:
I set to my seal that Jesus is true."

Go on in his name, and earnestly exhort all that know him to press forward to the mark. Encourage them to aspire after full salvation, salvation into the whole image of God. Beware you do not decline in your zeal for this: let no *prudence* hinder you. Let *prudence* "guide, not cool, its fires."

Still let it for his glory burn,
With unextinguishable blaze;
And trembling to its source return,
In flames of love, and joy, and praise.

But I had forgotten that I am in haste. I hope Mr. S. will be a blessing to many. He is alive to God. This day I set out for Bristol, and thence to Cornwall; but I hope to be at Bristol again on the 28th instant. Life is short! We have need to improve every moment!

Adieu!

THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION.

*To Miss Bolton.*LONDON, *July 18, 1773.*

MY DEAR SISTER: Your late conversation was exceeding pleasant to me. I had sometimes been almost inclined to think that your affection was lessened; but I now believe it is not. I trust your love is not grown cold. This gave me much satisfaction, though I could not but be concerned at seeing you so encumbered with worldly business. Surely it will not be so always. But God's time is best! Two or three of those little things I have sent you:

With peaceful mind thy race of duty run:
 God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
 But what thou wouldst thyself, if thou couldst see
 Through all events of things as well as he.

Let thy repentance be without delay:
 If thou defer it to another day,
 Thou must repent for a day more of sin,
 While a day less remains to do it in.

Nor steel nor flint alone produces fire,
 Nor spark arises till they both conspire:
 Nor faith alone, nor works without, is right;
 Salvation rises when they both unite.

If gold be offered thee, thou dost not say,
 "To-morrow I will take it, not to-day:"
 Salvation offer'd, why art thou so cool
 To let thyself become to-morrow's fool?

Prayer and thanksgiving is the vital breath
 That keeps the spirit of a man from death:
 For prayer attracts into the living soul
 The life that fills the universal whole;
 And giving thanks is breathing forth again
 The praise of Him who is the life of men.

Two different painters, artists in their way,
 Have drawn religion in her full display.
 To both she sat: one gazed at her all o'er;
 The other fixed upon her features more.
 Hervey has figured her with every grace
 That dress could give; but Law has hit her face.

The specious sermons of a learned man
 Are little else than flashes in the pan.
 The mere haranguing upon what they call
 Morality is powder without ball:
 But he who preaches with a Christian grace
 Fires at your vices, and the shot takes place.

Faith, Hope, and Love were questioned what they thought
 Of future glory, which religion taught.
 Now Faith believed it firmly to be true,
 And Hope expected so to find it too:
 Love answered, smiling with a conscious glow,
 "Believe! expect! I know it to be so."

Go on in this humble, gentle love, that you may abound therein

more and more. Aim at nothing higher than this : and may the God of love still possess you whole, and guide your every thought and word and work. Continue to pray for
Your affectionate brother.

TEMPTATION AND SIN.

The difference between temptation and sin is generally plain enough to all that are simple of heart ; but in some exempt cases it is not plain : there we want the unction of the Holy One. Voluntary humility, calling every defect a sin, is not well-pleasing to God. Sin, properly speaking, is neither more nor less than “ a voluntary transgression of a known law of God.”

There are a thousand instances wherein it is not possible literally to make restitution. All that we can advise in the case you mention is, 1. Let him that stole, steal no more ; let him be from this hour rigorously just. 2. Let him be a faithful steward of the mammon of unrighteousness, restoring all he can to God in the poor. (1773.)

A FORGIVING SPIRIT.

To a Young Disciple.

August 20, 1773.

I often heard my own mother make the same complaint with you. She did not *feel* near so much as my father did ; but she *did* ten times more than he did. You must labor to *do* so much the more, and pray that God would supply whatever is wanting. One degree of forgiveness is due to every one, though impenitent ; still I love him as I love all men. But the other degree, whereby I should again receive him as a friend, is only due to one who says, “ I repent ; ” that is, convinces me that he does really repent, and is entirely changed.

It is certain God has given you a talent, and I still think it ought to be used. I grant indeed to be hid and to be still is more agreeable to flesh and blood ; but is it more agreeable to him “ who hath left us an example, that we might tread in his steps ? ”

EXPERIENCE NEEDED.

Although there may be some use in teaching very young children to “ say their prayers daily ; ” yet I judge it to be utterly impossible to teach any to “ practice prayer ” till they are awakened. For what is prayer but the desire of the soul expressed in words to God, either inwardly or outwardly ? How, then, will you teach them to express a desire who feel no desire at all ? When, therefore, Madame Guion talks in that manner it often makes me afraid that both she and her teacher, Archbishop Fénelon, talked by rote of the things they knew not. Both of them had an amazing genius, but, I doubt, full little experience. It is exceeding certain neither his nor her writings are likely to do us any solid service. We have all the gold that is in them, without

the dross ; which is often not only useless but dangerous. Let you and I keep the good old way :

In doing and bearing the will of our Lord,
We still are preparing to meet our reward.

Go on steadily in this path : there is none better. By patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality. You shall reap if you faint not. (1773.)

INSTANT BLESSING.

BRISTOL, *September 29, 1773.*

Your own experience may give an answer to your question. You did yourself enjoy a foretaste of that constant communion with God, though it did not continue long. And you know it was given you in a moment. It was the same case with all those whom I have known, that are now enabled to pray without ceasing. To every one of them that blessing was given in an instant. So it will be given to you again ; although, probably, you will find a strong hope first, which will incite you to cry out,

“ Big with earnest expectation,
See me sit at thy feet,
Longing for salvation.”

Grace in one sense will make all things new. And I have sometimes known this done to such a degree that there has been no trace of the natural temper remaining. But generally the innocent natural temper does remain ; only refined, softened, and cast into the mold of love.

FULL LIBERTY.

To J. Benson.

January 8, 1774.

I am glad you “press all believers” to aspire after the full liberty of the children of God. They must not give up their faith in order to do this : herein you formerly seemed to be in some mistake. Let them go on from faith to faith ; from weak faith to that strong faith which not only conquers but casts out sin. Meantime, it is certain many call themselves believers who do not even conquer sin ; who are strangers to the whole inward kingdom of God, and void of the whole fruit of the Spirit.

THE GOOD OLD WAY.

LONDON, *January 10, 1774.*

MY DEAR BROTHER : It is nothing strange that those who love the world should not love to continue with us. Our road is too strait.

Down the stream of nature driven,
They seek a broader path to heaven.

However, let us keep in the good old way, and we know it will bring us peace at the last.

If you press all the believers to go on to perfection, and to expect deliverance from sin every moment, they will grow in grace. But if ever they lose that expectation they will grow flat and cold.

Last week I was under the surgeon's hands; but am now, blessed be God, better than I have been for some years.

THE SECOND BLESSING.

Mrs. Jane Barton.

BRISTOL, *October 8, 1774.*

MY DEAR SISTER: It is exceeding certain that God did give you the second blessing, properly so called. He delivered you from the root of bitterness, from inbred as well as actual sin. And at that time you were enabled to give him all your heart; to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing. Afterward, he permitted his work to be tried; and sometimes as by fire. For a while you were not moved; but could say in all things, "Good is the will of the Lord." But it seems you gave way, by little and little, till you were in some measure shorn of your strength. What have Brother Barton and you to do but to arise at once and shake yourselves from the dust? Stir up the gift of God that is in you! Look unto him that is mighty to save! Is he not able, in every sense, to turn your captivity? He has not forgotten to be gracious; neither will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure. He is a God nigh at hand. Only believe, and help, while yet you ask, is given! Trust in him, and conquer all.

I am
Your affectionate brother.

TWO POINTS OF SUCCESS.

To Mr. Charles Perronet.

LONDON, *December 28, 1774.*

DEAR CHARLES: Certainly there is nothing amiss in the desire to do something for a good Master; only still adding (in this, as in all things else), "Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt."

If we could once bring all our preachers, itinerant and local, uniformly and steadily to insist on those two points, *Christ dying for us*, and *Christ reigning in us*, we should shake the trembling gates of hell. I think most of them are now exceeding clear herein, and the rest come nearer and nearer; especially since they have read Mr. Fletcher's *Checks*, which have removed many difficulties out of the way.

FRIENDSHIP.

The praying much for those we love much is doubtless the fruit of affection; but such an affection as is well-pleasing to God, and is wrought in us by his own Spirit. Therefore, it is certain the intercession that flows from that affection is according to the will of God.

That is an exceedingly nice question, "How far may we desire the approbation of good men?" I think it cannot be proved that such a desire is anywhere forbidden in Scripture. But it requires a very strong influence of the Holy Spirit to prevent its running into excess.

Friendship is one species of love, and is, in its proper sense, a disinterested reciprocal love between two persons. Wicked persons are, it seems, incapable of friendship. For "he who fears no God can love no friend." Nor, indeed, is every one that fears God capable of friendship. It requires a peculiar turn of mind, without which it can have no being. The properties of Christian friendship are the same as the properties of love; with those which St. Paul so beautifully describes in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. And it produces, as occasions offer, every good word and work. Many have laid down the rules whereby it should be regulated; but they are not to be comprised in a few lines. One is, "Give up every thing to your friend, except a good conscience toward God."

There have undoubtedly been instances of real friendship among Jews, yea, and among heathens who were susceptible of it; but they were by no means wicked men; they were men fearing God, and working righteousness, according to the dispensation they were under. I apprehend wicked men, under whatever dispensation, to be absolutely incapable of true friendship. By wicked men I mean either men openly profane or men void of justice, mercy, and truth. There may be a shadow of friendship between those, whether of the same or of different sexes. But surely the substance is wanting: in all my experience I have found no exception to this rule. (1774.)

SPEAK THE TRUTH.

We must speak the plain truth, wherever we are, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. And among our societies we must enforce our rules, with all mildness and steadiness. At first this must appear strange to those who are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. But after a time all that desire to be real Christians see the advantage of it.

SCREAM NO MORE.

Letter to Thomas Rankin.

May 19, 1775.

MY DEAR BROTHER: Always take advice or reproof as a favor; it is the surest mark of love.

I advised you once, and you took it as an affront; nevertheless, I will do it once more.

Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me, whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream. Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, "He shall not cry;"

the word properly means, He shall not *scream*. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud, often vehemently ; but I never scream ; I never strain myself ; I dare not ; I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners, too, were in such grievous darkness before they died was because they shortened their own lives.

O, John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper ! By nature you are very far from it ; you are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from

Your affectionate brother.

OPIMUM.

Letter to Rev. John King.

July 28, 1775.

Taking opium is full as bad as taking drams. It equally hurts the understanding, and is, if possible, more pernicious to the health than even rum or brandy. None should touch it, if they have the least regard either for their souls or bodies.

ROOTING OUT EVIL.

Letter to Joseph Benson.

October 22, 1776.

You did right in excluding from our society so notorious an offender. And you have now a providential call to stand in the gap between the living and the dead. Fear nothing. Begin in the name of God and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the society. But my belief is, a hundred and fifty are now clear of blame ; and if you are steady a hundred more will amend. You must, at all events, tear up this evil by the roots. The *Word to a Smuggler* must be read and dispersed. And secure your fellow-laborers, that you may all speak one thing. Go on, for God is with you.

THE INWARD KINGDOM.

To Miss Bosanquet.

LONDON, December 21, 1776.

MY DEAR SISTER : You are a great deal less happy than you would be if you did not reason too much. This frequently gives that subtle adversary an advantage against you. You have need to be continually as a little child, simply looking up for whatever you want.

It is devoutly to be wished for, that we may rejoice evermore ; and it is certain the inward kingdom of God implies not only righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost. You have, therefore, reason to ask for and expect the whole gospel blessing. Yet it cannot be denied that many times joy is withheld, even from them that walk uprightly. The great point of all is a heart

and a life entirely devoted to God. Keep only this and let all the rest go ; give him your heart and it sufficeth. I am, my dear sister, your ever affectionate brother.

HEAVEN.

Some writers make a distinction which seems not improper. They speak of the essential part of heaven and the accessory parts. A man without any learning is naturally led into the same distinction. So the poor dying peasant, in *Frederica*, "To be sure, heaven is a fine place, a very fine place ; but I do not care for that, I want to see God and to be with him." I do not know whether the usual question be well stated, "Is heaven a state, or a place?" There is no opposition between these two ; it is both the one and the other. It is the place where God more immediately dwells with those saints who are in a glorified state. Homer could only conceive of the place that it was paved with brass. Milton, in one place, makes heaven's pavement beaten gold ; in another he defines it more sublimely, "The house of God, star-paved." As full an account of this house of God as it can yet enter into our hearts to conceive is given us in various parts of the Revelation. There we have a fair prospect into the holiest, where are, first, "He that sitteth upon the throne ;" then the "four living creatures ;" next, the "twenty-four elders ;" afterward, the "great multitude, which no man can number ;" and, surrounding them all, the various "myriads of angels," whom God hath constituted in a wonderful order.

But what is the essential part of heaven? Undoubtedly, it is to see God, to know God, to love God. We shall then know both his nature and his works of creation and providence and of redemption. Even in paradise, in the intermediate state between death and the resurrection, we shall learn more concerning these in an hour than we could in an age during our stay in the body. We cannot tell, indeed, how we shall then exist, or what kind of organs we shall have ; the soul will not be encumbered with flesh and blood ; but probably it will have some sort of ethereal vehicle, even before God clothes us "with our nobler house of empyrean light." (1776.)

LOYALTY.

It is my religion which obliges me "to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers." Loyalty is with me an essential branch of religion, and which I am sorry any Methodist should forget. There is the closest connection, therefore, between my religious and my political conduct ; the self-same authority enjoining me to "fear God," and to "honor the king." (1777.)

A DYING MAN.

To the Bishop of —.

MY LORD : I am a dying man, having already one foot in the grave. Humanly speaking, I cannot long creep upon the earth,

being now nearer ninety than eighty years of age. But I cannot die in peace before I have discharged this office of Christian love to your lordship. I write without ceremony, as neither hoping nor fearing any thing from your lordship or from any man living. And I ask, in the name and in the presence of Him to whom both you and I are shortly to give an account, why do you trouble those who are quiet in the land? those that fear God and work righteousness? Does your lordship know what the Methodists are? that many thousands of them are zealous members of the Church of England, and strongly attached, not only to his majesty, but to his present ministry? Why should your lordship, setting religion out of the question, throw away such a body of respectable friends? Is it for their religious sentiments? Alas, my lord! is this a time to persecute any man for conscience' sake? I beseech you, my lord, do as you would be done to. You are a man of sense; you are a man of learning; nay, I verily believe (what is of infinitely more value) you are a man of piety. Then think and let think. I pray God to bless you with the choicest of his blessings. I am, my lord, etc.

NEVER IN A HURRY.

December 10, 1777.

You do not at all understand my manner of life. Though I am always in haste I am never in a hurry; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. But I generally travel alone in my carriage; and, consequently, am as retired ten hours in a day as if I was in a wilderness. On other days I never spend less than three hours (frequently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons in the kingdom who spend so many hours secluded from all company. Yet I find time to visit the sick and the poor; and I must do it if I believe the Bible, if I believe these are the marks whereby the Shepherd of Israel will know and judge his sheep at the great day; therefore, when there is time and opportunity for it, who can doubt but this is matter of absolute duty? When I was at Oxford, and lived almost like a hermit, I saw not how any busy man could be saved. I scarce thought it possible for a man to retain a Christian spirit amid the noise and bustle of the world. God taught me better by my own experience. I had ten times more business in America (that is, at intervals) than ever I had in my life. But it was no hinderance to silence of spirit.

MORE FULLY SANCTIFIED.

To Hester Ann Rogers.

LONDON, February 11, 1779.

MY DEAR HETTY: It is a great mercy that, on the one hand, you have previous warning of the trials that are at hand; and, on the other, are not careful about them, but only prepared to

encounter them. We know, indeed, that these, as well as all things, are ordered by unerring wisdom ; and are given us exactly at the right time, and in due number, weight, and measure. And they continue no longer than is best ; for chance has no share in the government of the world. The Lord reigns and disposes all things, strongly and sweetly, for the good of them that love him. I rejoice to hear that you have now less hinderance in the way, and can oftener converse with his people. Be sure to improve every one of those precious opportunities of doing and receiving good.

I am often grieved to observe that, although on his part "the gifts and callings of God are without repentance," although he never repents of any thing he has given us, but is willing to give it always, yet so very few retain the same ardor of affection which they received, either when they were justified or when they were (more fully) sanctified. Certainly, none need to lose any part of their light or their love. It may increase more and more. Of this you are a witness for God ; and so is our dear Miss —. You have not lost any thing of what you have received ; your love has never grown cold since the moment God visited you with his great salvation. And I hope also you will ever retain the same affection for

Yours most tenderly.

EXPECT TEMPTATIONS.

To Jane Barton.

LONDON, *November 9, 1779.*

MY DEAR SISTER : If you continue earnest to save your souls both of you must expect temptations, and those of various sorts. Sometimes you will be tried by friends or enemies ; sometimes by one another ; at some times, perhaps, you will be quite out of conceit with each other, and all things will appear wrong. Then beware of anger ; of fretfulness or peevishness, which maketh the grasshopper a burden. But from all this the God whom you serve is able to deliver you ; yea, and he *will* deliver you. Trust him and praise him. I am

Yours affectionately.

LEARNING TO SPEAK.

In order to speak for God you must not confer with flesh and blood, or you will never begin. You should vehemently resist the reasoning devil, who will never want arguments for your silence. Indeed, naturally all the passions justify themselves ; so do fear and shame in particular. In this case, therefore, the simple, child-like boldness of faith is peculiarly necessary. And when you have broke through and made the beginning, then prudence has its office—that is, Christian (not worldly) prudence, springing from the unction of the Holy One, and teaching you how far and in what manner to speak, according to a thousand various circumstances.

REVIVALS.

The remark of Luther, "that a revival of religion seldom continues above thirty years," has been verified many times in several countries. But it will not always hold. The present revival of religion in England has already continued fifty years. And, blessed be God, it is at least as likely to continue as it was twenty or thirty years ago. Indeed, it is far more likely; as it not only spreads wider, but sinks deeper than ever; more and more persons being able to testify that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. We have, therefore, reason to hope that this revival of religion will continue, and continually increase, till the time when all Israel shall be saved, and the fullness of the Gentiles shall come. (1779.)

GOD'S WAY THE BEST.

To R. C. Brackenbury.

January 10, 1783.

DEAR SIR: As I expect to remain in London till the beginning of March, I hope to have the pleasure of spending a little time with you before I set out on my spring and summer journeys, which I shall probably continue as long as I live. And who would wish to live for any meaner purpose than to serve God in our generation? I know my health and strength are continued for this very thing. And if ever I should listen to that siren song, "Spare thyself," I believe my Master would spare me no longer, but soon take me away. It pleases him to deal with you in a different way. He frequently calls you not so much to act as to suffer. And you may well say:

"O take thy way! Thy way is best:

Grant or deny me ease.

This is but tuning of my breast

To make the music please."

I am glad you are still determined to do what you can, and to do it without delay. But all are not of this mind. I have just received a letter from Mr. —, formerly one of our traveling preachers, informing me, whereas it has pleased God to take away his dear partner, he is resolved again to give up himself to the work—after he has settled his worldly business, which he thinks will take but sixteen or seventeen months! Would one think he had ever read the Epistle of St. James? or that he had heard those words, "What is your life? It is even a vapor, which appeareth and vanisheth away." Commending you to Him who is able to save you to the uttermost, I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother.

SHEPHERDLESS SHEEP.

To Bishop Lowth.

August 10, 1780.

MY LORD: Some time since I received your lordship's favor, for which I return your lordship my sincere thanks. Those persons

did not apply to the society, because they had nothing to ask of them. They wanted no salary for their minister; they were themselves able and willing to maintain him. They therefore applied by me to your lordship, as members of the Church of England, and desirous so to continue, begging the favor of your lordship, after your lordship had examined him, to ordain a pious man who might officiate as their minister.

But your lordship observes, "There are three ministers in that country already." True, my lord; but what are three to watch over all the souls in that extensive country? Will your lordship permit me to speak freely? I dare not do otherwise. I am on the verge of the grave, and know not the hour when I shall drop into it. Suppose there were three score of those missionaries in the country, could I in conscience recommend these souls to their care? Do they take any care of their own souls? If they do (I speak it with concern!) I fear they are almost the only missionaries in America that do. My lord, I do not speak rashly; I have been in America, and so have several with whom I have lately conversed. And both I and they know what manner of men the far greater part of these are. They are men who have neither the power of religion nor the form; men that lay no claim to piety nor even decency.

Give me leave, my lord, to speak more freely still; perhaps it is the last time I shall trouble your lordship. I know your lordship's abilities and extensive learning; I believe, what is far more, that your lordship fears God. I have heard that your lordship is unfashionably diligent in examining the candidates for holy orders; yea, that your lordship is generally at the pains of examining them yourself. *Examining them!* In what respect? Why, whether they understand a little Latin and Greek, and can answer a few trite questions in the science of divinity! Alas, how little does this avail! Does your lordship examine whether they serve Christ or Belial? whether they love God or the world? whether they ever had any serious thoughts about heaven or hell? whether they have any real desire to save their own souls or the souls of others? If not, what have they to do with holy orders? and what will become of the souls committed to their care?

My lord, I do by no means despise learning; I know the value of it too well. But what is this, particularly in a Christian minister, compared to piety? What is it in a man that has no religion? "As a jewel in a swine's snout."

Some time since I recommended to your lordship a plain man, whom I had known above twenty years as a person of deep, genuine piety and of unblamable conversation. But he neither understood Greek nor Latin; and he affirmed in so many words that he believed it was his duty to preach, whether he was ordained or no. I believe so too. What became of him since I know not; but I suppose he received Presbyterian ordination; and I cannot blame him if he did. He might think any ordination better than none.

I do not know that Mr. Hoskins had any favor to ask of the society. He asked the favor of your lordship to ordain him, that he might minister to a little flock in America. But your lordship did not see good to ordain him; but your lordship did see good to ordain and send into America other persons who knew something of Greek and Latin, but who knew no more of saving souls than of catching whales.

In this respect also I mourn for poor America; for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no shepherds at all, particularly in the northern colonies; and the case of the rest is little better, for their own shepherds pity them not. They cannot, for they have no pity on themselves. They take no thought or care about their own souls.

Wishing your lordship every blessing from the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, I remain, my lord,

Your lordship's dutiful son and servant.

SHUN DELUSIONS.

To Miss Bolton.

WEDNESBURY, March 28, 1785.

MY DEAR SISTER: You are in danger of falling into both extremes; of making light of as well as fainting under his chastening. This you do whenever you look at any circumstance without seeing the hand of God in it; without seeing at the same instant this unkindness, this reproach, this returning evil for good, as well as this faintness, this weariness, this pain, is the cup which my Father hath given me. And shall I not drink it? Why does he give it me? Only for my profit, that I "may be a partaker of his holiness."

I have often found an aptness both in myself and others to connect events that have no real relation to each other. So one says, "I am as sure this is the will of God as that I am justified." Another says, "God as surely spake this to my heart as ever he spoke to me at all." This is an exceedingly dangerous way of thinking or speaking. We know not what it may lead us to. It may sap the very foundation of our religion. It may insensibly draw us into deism or atheism. My dear Nancy, my sister, my friend, beware of this! The grace of God is sufficient for you! And whatever clouds may interpose between, his banner over you is love. Look to yourself that you lose not the things that you have gained, but that you may receive a full reward.

HOLD FAST.

To Miss Cooke.

LONDON, October 30, 1785.

My dear Miss Cooke leans to the right hand error. It is safer to think too little than too much of yourself. I blame none for not believing he is in the favor of God till he is in a manner con-

strained to believe it. But, laying all circumstances together, I can make no doubt of your having a measure of faith. Many years ago, when one was describing the glorious privilege of a believer, I cried out, "If this be so I have no faith." He replied, "*Habes fidem, sed exiguam* ; 'You have faith, but it is weak.'" The very same thing I say to you, my dear friend. You have faith, but it is only as a grain of mustard-seed. Hold fast what you have and ask for what you want. There is an irreconcilable variability in the operations of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men; more especially as to the manner of justification. Many find him rushing upon them like a torrent, while they experience

The o'erwhelming power of saving grace.

This has been the experience of many; perhaps of more in this late visitation than in any other age since the time of the apostles. But in others he works in a very different way :

He deigns his influence to infuse,
Sweet, refreshing, as the violet dews.

It has pleased him to work the latter way in you from the beginning; and it is not improbable he will continue (as he has begun) to work in a gentle and almost imperceptible manner. Let him take his own way; he is wiser than you; he will do all things well. Do not reason against him, but let the prayer of your heart be,

"Mold as thou wilt thy passive clay."

I commit you and your dear sisters to his tender care, and am,
my dear friend, Most affectionately yours.

PREACH FULL SALVATION.

To Mr. (afterward Dr.) Adam Clarke.

LONDON, February 3, 1786.

MY DEAR BROTHER: You do well in insisting upon full and present salvation, whether men will hear or forbear; as also in preaching abroad, when the weather permits, and recommending fasting, both by precept and example. But you need not wonder that all these are opposed, not only by formalists, but by half Methodists. You should not forget French, or any thing you have learned. I do not know whether I have read the book you speak of; you may send your translation at your leisure. Be all in earnest, and you shall see greater things than these. I am, my dear Adam, Your affectionate brother.

HIS OWN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

Letter to Miss Ritchie.

LONDON, February 24, 1786.

MY DEAR BETSY: It is doubtless the will of the Lord we should be guided by our reason, so far as it can go. But in many cases it gives us very little light, and in others none at all.

In all cases it cannot guide us right, but in subordination to the unction of the Holy One. So that in all our ways we are to acknowledge him, and he will direct our paths.

I do not remember to have heard or read any thing like my own experience. Almost ever since I can remember I have been led in a peculiar way. I go on in an even line, being very little raised at one time, or depressed at another. Count Zinzendorf observes there are three different ways wherein it pleases God to lead his people. Some are guided almost in every instance by apposite texts of Scripture. Others see a clear and plain reason for every thing they are to do. And yet others are led not so much by Scripture or reason as by particular impressions. I am very rarely led by impressions, but generally by reason and by Scripture. I see abundantly more than I feel. I want to feel more love and zeal for God.

My very dear friend, adieu !

THE PRELUDE OF PURE LOVE.

To Mr. C——.

BATH, September 9, 1786.

It gives me much satisfaction, my dear friend, to observe you are happier than when you wrote last. I do not doubt but you have at sometimes a rich foretaste of the state which your soul pants after. And even

These wandering gleams of light,
And gentle ardors from above,
Have made you sit, like seraph bright,
Some moments on a throne of love.

But you know you are not to rest here; this is but a drop out of the ocean. Only this has been known again and again, that one of those happy moments has been the prelude of pure love. It has opened into the full liberty of the children of God. Who knows but this may be your happy experience? But the next time your soul is so caught up, He that loves you may touch your nature clean, and so take you into the holiest, that

You may never leave the skies,
Never stoop to earth again ?

I am now intent upon my own work, finishing the *Life of Mr. Fletcher*; this requires all the time I have to spare; so that as far as it is possible I must, for two or three months, shut myself up. Two weeks I give to Bristol; after that time I return to London. I cannot, therefore, have the happiness of seeing Trowbridge this autumn. But might I not see you or your sisters at Bristol? If I am invisible to others, I would not be so to you. You may always command every thing that is in the power of, my very dear friend,

Yours in life and in death.

THOUGHTS UPON METHODISM.

1. I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out.

2. What was their fundamental doctrine? That the Bible is the whole and soul rule both of Christian faith and practice. Hence they learned, (1) That religion is an inward principle; that it is no other than the mind that was in Christ; or, in other words, the renewal of the soul after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. (2) That this can never be wrought in us but by the power of the Holy Ghost. (3) That we receive this, and every other blessing, merely for the sake of Christ; and, (4) That whosoever hath the mind that was in Christ, the same is our brother and sister and mother.

3. In the year 1729 four young students in Oxford agreed to spend their evenings together. They were all zealous members of the Church of England, and had no peculiar opinions, but were distinguished only by their constant attendance on the church and sacrament. In 1735 they were increased to fifteen; when the chief of them embarked for America, intending to preach to the heathen Indians. Methodism then seemed to die away; but it revived again in the year 1738; especially after Mr. Wesley (not being allowed to preach in the churches) began to preach in the fields. One and another then coming to inquire what they must do to be saved, he desired them to meet him all together; which they did, and increased continually in number. In November a large building, the Foundry, being offered him, he began preaching therein, morning and evening; at five in the morning and seven in the evening, that the people's labor might not be hindered.

4. From the beginning the men and women sat apart, as they always did in the primitive church; and none were suffered to call any place their own, but the first comers sat down first. They had no pews, and all the benches for rich and poor were of the same construction. Mr. Wesley began the service with a short prayer, then sung a hymn and preached (usually about half an hour), then sung a few verses of another hymn, and concluded with prayer. His constant doctrine was, salvation by faith, preceded by repentance, and followed by holiness.

5. But when a large number of people was joined, the great difficulty was to keep them together. For they were continually scattering hither and thither, and we knew no way to help it. But God provided for this also, when we thought not of it. A year or two after, Mr. Wesley met the chief of the society in Bristol, and inquired, "How shall we pay the debt upon the

preaching house?" Captain Foy stood up, and said, "Let every one in the society give a penny a week, and it will easily be done." "But many of them," said one, "have not a penny to give." "True," said the captain; "then put ten or twelve of them to me. Let each of these give what they can weekly, and I will supply what is wanting." Many others made the same offer. So Mr. Wesley divided the societies among them; assigning a class of about twelve persons to each of these, who were termed leaders.

6. Not long after, one of these informed Mr. Wesley that, calling on such an one in his house, he found him quarreling with his wife. Another was found in drink. It immediately struck into Mr. Wesley's mind, "This is the very thing we wanted. The leaders are the persons who may not only receive the contributions, but also watch over the souls of their brethren." The society in London being informed of this, willingly followed the example of that in Bristol; as did every society from that time, whether in Europe or America. By this means it was easily found if any grew weary or faint, and help was speedily administered. And if any walked disorderly, they were quickly discovered, and either amended or dismissed.

7. For those who knew in whom they had believed, there was another help provided. Five or six, either married or single men, met together at such an hour as was convenient, according to the direction of St. James, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, and ye shall be healed." And five or six of the married or single women met together for the same purpose. Innumerable blessings have attended this institution, especially in those who were going on to perfection. When any seemed to have attained this, they were allowed to meet with a select number, who appeared, so far as man could judge, to be partakers of the same "great salvation."

8. From this short sketch of Methodism (so called) any man of understanding may easily discern that it is only plain, scriptural religion, guarded by a few prudential regulations. The essence of it is holiness of heart and life; the circumstantial all point to this. And as long as they are joined together in the people called Methodists, no weapon formed against them shall prosper. But if even the circumstantial parts are despised, the essential will soon be lost. And if ever the essential parts should evaporate, what remains will be dung and dross.

9. It nearly concerns us to understand how the case stands with us at present. I fear, wherever riches have increased (exceeding few are the exceptions) the essence of religion, the mind that was in Christ, has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore, do I not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality; and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches.

10. How, then, is it possible that Methodism, that is, the religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently, they increase in goods. Hence they proportionably increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away.

11. Is there no way to prevent this? this continual declension of pure religion? We ought not to forbid people to be diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich! What way, then (I ask again), can we take, that our money may not sink us to the nethermost hell? There is one way, and there is no other under heaven. If those who "gain all they can," and "save all they can," will likewise "give all they can," then, the more they gain, the more they will grow in grace, and the more treasure they will lay up in heaven.

LONDON, August 4, 1786.

THE ITINERANCY.

The following letter on the "time limit" of the itinerancy was sent by Mr. Wesley to Bishop Asbury soon after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

*Letter to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America.**

BRISTOL, September 10, 1784.

1. By a very uncommon train of providences many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from their mother-country and erected into independent States. The English government has no authority over them either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice, and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

2. Lord King's *Account of the Primitive Church* convinced me many years ago that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace' sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the National Church to which I belonged.

* This document is introduced by Mr. Wesley in the following manner: "What is the state of our societies in North America? A. It may best appear by the following letter. If any one is minded to dispute concerning diocesan episcopacy, he may, but I have better work."
—EDITOR WORKS.

3. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction ; in America there are none, neither any parish ministers. So that for some hundred miles together there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end, and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

4. I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America, as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy little differing from that of the Church of England (I think, the best constituted national Church in the world), which I advise all the traveling preachers to use, on the Lord's day, in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

5. If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

6. It has, indeed, been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object : (1) I desired the Bishop of London to ordain only one ; but could not prevail. (2) If they consented we know the slowness of their proceedings ; but the matter admits of no delay. (3) If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us ! (4) As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

JOHN WESLEY.

METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

To the Rev. Francis Asbury.

LONDON, September 20, 1788.

There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans and the relation wherein I stand to all the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists ; I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all ; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you he could not pro-

vide were it not for me, were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but also support him in so doing.

But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the doctor and you differ from me. I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep; you strut along. I found a school; you a college; nay, and call it after your own names!* O, beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and "Christ be all in all!"

One instance of this, of your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me *bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart. And let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely I am

Your affectionate friend and brother.

A SCRIPTURAL, RATIONAL CHRISTIAN.

To Rev. F. Garrettson.

LONDON, January 24, 1789.

MY DEAR BROTHER: It signifies but little where we are so we are but fully employed for our good Master. Whether you went, therefore, to the East, it is all one so you were laboring to promote his work. You are following the order of his providence wherever it appeared, as a holy man strongly expressed it, in a kind of holy disordered order. But there is one expression that occurs twice or thrice in yours which gives me some concern: you speak of finding *freedom* to do this or that. This is a word much liable to be abused. If I have plain Scripture, or plain reason for doing a thing, well. These are my rules, and my only rules. I regard not whether I had freedom or no. This is an unscriptural expression, and a very fallacious rule. I wish to be, in every point, great and small, a scriptural, rational Christian.

In one instance, formally, you promised to send me your journal. Will you break your word, because you do not find freedom to keep it? Is not this enthusiasm? O, be not of this way of thinking? You know not whither it may lead you. You are called to

Square your useful life below
By reason and by grace.

But whatever you do with regard to me you must do quickly, or you will no more in this world.

Your affectionate friend and brother.

* Cokesbury College was formed from the names of its founders—Coke and Asbury.—EDITOR WORKS.

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